

# CANADA

## THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES IN 1912



ISSUED BY DIRECTION OF  
HON. W. J. ROCHE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR  
OTTAWA CANADA  
1913



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NOTE:—The Proprietors of The Times have kindly given permission for the quotation here of articles by me published in that journal; and acknowledgement is due the proprietors of The Field for a similar courtesy.—H. A. Kennedy.

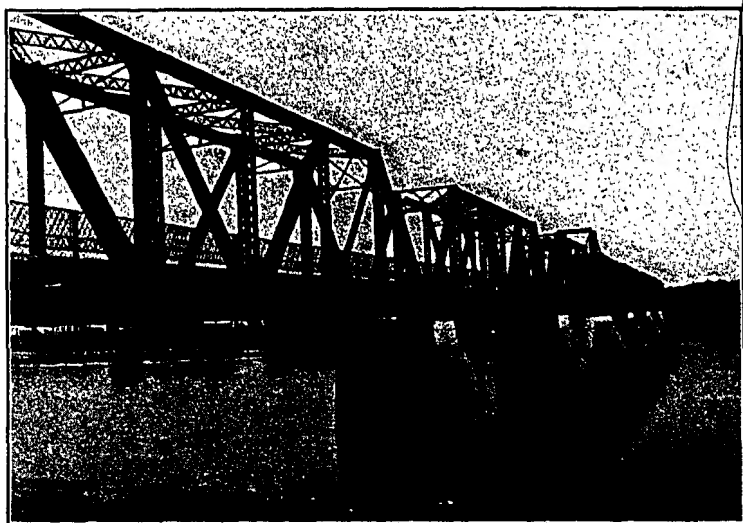
# THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES

## CHAPTER I

### "TAKING STOCK."

I have been asked to describe, without fear or favour, the stage of progress attained by the Prairie Provinces of Canada. A good many of the more thoughtful westerners themselves occasionally pause in the rush of business to "take stock" with self-criticizing eye; and it may be helpful to them, as well as to the Old Country folk for whose information this writing is chiefly intended, if a modest and friendly but independent observer describes as fairly as possible the position they seem to have reached.

While writing from an independent standpoint, and quite resolved to describe things as I really find them and not as I or anyone else would like to find them, I have not the slightest wish to be credited (or debited) with the indifference of an outsider. I have known the



Canadian Northern Railway Bridge at Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

country too long and intimately to think of it with indifference; and the better I know it the more affection and admiration it inspires.

In 1905, in the course of a long journey on and off the track as the special correspondent of *The Times*, I was able to compare the West as it then was with the West as I had seen it in 1885. The results were published, first in a series of articles, and then in the volume, still in circulation, entitled "New Canada and the New Canadians," with an introduction by Lord Strathcona, the venerable High Commissioner of the Dominion in London. It is hardly too much to say that the changes of the past six or seven years have been greater than those of the previous twenty, extraordinary as those had been.

The rapid development which has compelled the attention of the world since the new provinces were created in 1905 has been the unbroken continuation of a progress which became remarkable for its rapidity soon after this century began. But rapidity of movement is

no longer the only outstanding characteristic of the West. Its pace is as hot as ever; but the observer now discovers a substantiality, a solidity, a firmly-rooted and robustly growing civilization, quite as surprising to the intelligent mind as mere speed is, and even more admirable. My object now is not to compile a guide-book or geography of Western Canada, but to give my own impressions of this rapidly developed and developing civilization, illustrated by the actual experiences of men known to me, who have put the country to the severest test by making their living out of it. After a bird's eye view of the subject, I propose to describe in greater detail some of its most prominent features, such as the latest method of grain-growing by machinery; the "mixed farming," which practically means raising fodder and feeding it to live stock; the various forms of stock-raising; the growth of town populations and the conditions of their life; and, not least, that trade in land which occupies such a phenomenal position in the thoughts and commercial activities of the West.

**Closer Settlement.** The population of the prairie, to begin with, is no longer a mere outline, a network of long strings of settlement with great blank spaces in between. The strings have widened into belts, and the blank spaces are not only shrunk in area but dotted with pioneering settlers who know they have not long to wait before the railway builders catch up with them. Let me give one or two notable examples.

In 1905 I crossed the prairie from Battleford to the South Saskatchewan River, a distance of about 180 miles, and found it, except in one little spot, absolutely unchanged since I had crossed it in 1885,—a silent wilderness, the antelope and prairie wolf un-

**Three Examples.** challenged in possession. Today I find a large part of it dotted with towns, along three new railways running east and west; and farmers innumerable raising vast quantities of grain. Further west in the same block I find more railways running north and south, and, before going nearly so far, an agricultural community spread wide over the region north of the Red Deer River. In South Saskatchewan, between the United States frontier and the Canadian Pacific main line, I find another big stretch of wilderness cut up into homesteads. And away in the north-west of Alberta the prairie districts of the Peace River Valley have already attracted thousands of homesteaders, though to get there from the nearest railway many of them have had to drive 500 miles.

The older districts, meanwhile, have not been standing still. The little blanks are being filled in as well as the big ones. Regions thinly settled five years ago are more thickly settled now. The joint population of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, which had risen from 419,512 in 1901 to 808,863 in 1906, had further reached 1,322,499 in 1911, according to the census. In the same five years the farm area actually under crop had doubled, rising from eight to sixteen million acres.

This simultaneous spreading out and filling in of the population has wrought a far greater change in Western conditions than can be expressed even by the leaps and bounds of statistics.

The cultivated area is now so large that accidents of weather in one district, or even in a number of districts, may occur without very serious effects on the community as a whole. And the enlargement of the cultivated area has been accompanied by an improvement of the methods of cultivation, owing partly to longer experience of the country's idiosyncracies and partly to the application of scientific methods of dealing with the soil. Besides, the agricultural West no longer puts its eggs all in one basket. Some districts do; but even there individual farmers have broken away from local custom and

developed lines of their own. Grain is still king; but rivals are drawing near the throne.

Not that grain is slackening in its advance. It has gained immensely, both in area and in its ability to cope with drought. Wheat from the new Canadian West carries off the honours at American fairs, in competition with the whole United States, thanks largely to the lavish distribution of high-class seed by the Dominion Government. But dairying, the growing of vegetables, the breeding of cattle and horses and pigs to supply the new settlers' demands, all are acquiring more and more importance. The quality of the animals raised is steadily improving. The farmers are coming to realize the value of better stock, and can better afford to buy them. In many parts alfalfa is being grown,—that wonderful permanent hay, which goes on year after year supplying the herd with material for beef and milk, yet keeping the soil's fertility untouched. Maize, long thought impossible in those latitudes, has established itself here and there, and varieties will almost certainly be developed which will grow profitably over a great part of the prairie.

As newcomers settle among the old, the comfort of both is increased. It is not so far to the nearest neighbour as it was. In fact, I have been in many western districts, where the farmhouses are on the average as close together as they are in agricultural districts of



A Manitoba Farmer's Home in which Comfort and Wealth are Evident.

my acquaintance in England. In such places, the old isolation is gone.

Almost everywhere, it is going. To the settler's wife, especially, this is a vast relief. To her credit be it said, as a rule she accepts the conditions of her new and strange home even more readily than her husband does. Still, the presence of another woman on the next quarter section, within a few minutes' walk, means much in an emergency. Still more welcome is the proximity of a doctor at critical times; and the thicker the population, the more certainly is at least one doctor to be found in the nearest village. The telephone, too, is making its way in the rural districts, and wherever that is installed the feeling and the consequences of isolation have practically vanished. Road-making is in its infancy; still, there it is, in active progress. And many rivers have been bridged where a few years ago there was only a ferry, if that.

While the isolation of western country life is fast diminishing, its toll also is being much relieved, and the profit from that toll is at the same time increased. Thanks to the rapid construction of new railways, the distance which a farmer has to travel every time he has to fetch anything from a town or station, and every time he has to haul a load to elevator or market, has been greatly lessened. This means that expenditure, alike of time, money and labour, has been cut down. A prosperous friend of mine in Manitoba tells me that when he began farming there he had to haul his grain 40 miles to the nearest station, and, when he got there, got only 1s. 5½d. a bushel for wheat of the highest grade. "Today," he says, "a farmer, even in the newer districts, thinks himself pretty far afield if he is ten miles from a station, and he gets over 2s. 1d. a bushel for a low grade wheat."

The expenditure of labour and time has also been cut down by mechanical inventions. A Scottish farmer in Manitoba the other day showed me a little portable gasoline engine standing beside the kitchen door. "It does pretty nearly everything," he said. "It pumps the water from the well. It works the washing-machine,—and you can imagine what a relief that is to my wife. It grinds or crushes cattle feed at the rate of a bushel a minute. It cuts up the wood for fuel, with a little circular saw. It is an 8 horse-power machine, and cost £60, and the gallon of gasoline it uses in an hour costs 10½d. You can get at lower cost a 2 horse-power machine for light work; but I consider my £60 a profitable investment. I knew nothing about machinery, but I have been able to do everything this engine needs; and nothing has gone wrong with it yet, though I've been using it eight months." The great gasoline engines, that plough the prairie and thresh and reap and haul the crops, I shall have to describe in another chapter.

The very look of the western farm-house has changed. You still find the log house and the sod house, as primitive as ever without, while often cosy and even well-furnished within. But the settler on graduating from the log or sod class does not as a matter of course put up as his second dwelling the regulation box that would have satisfied him a few years ago. The tasteless monotony of western habitations has been broken at any rate by a sprinkling of houses pleasant to look upon, well-proportioned, tasteful in colour,—dark green is the fashionable tint just now for the shingled roof,—with shady verandahs, and often set in neatly fenced gardens where the wild flowers of the new world and the cultivated favourites of the old shine side by side.

On what I once knew as the bleak, bare plain of southern Manitoba I now visit a pretty little farm-house, with its lawn and its flower beds, set gem-like in a grove of maples, forty feet high, which shelter it from the north and westerly winds, with a beautiful double hedge of spruce and lilac screening the garden from the barnyard.

Those maples are the growth of 20 years; and in these older-settled parts you find many such farmers who have had time and taste to surround themselves with the beauties of adapted nature. Even in the newer and farther west, the policy of the Government in distributing seedlings of hardy and handsome varieties has begun to transfigure the treeless plain, and has added a cultivated grace to the settler's home in the "park lands" where poplar and willow bluffs abound.

The growth of taste, or, shall I say, the increased prosperity which gives men a chance to indulge their taste, shows itself in, as well as outside the house. I do not pretend that the artistic standard of the West is extraordinarily high, but at least it approaches the standard of the countries whence the settlers come.

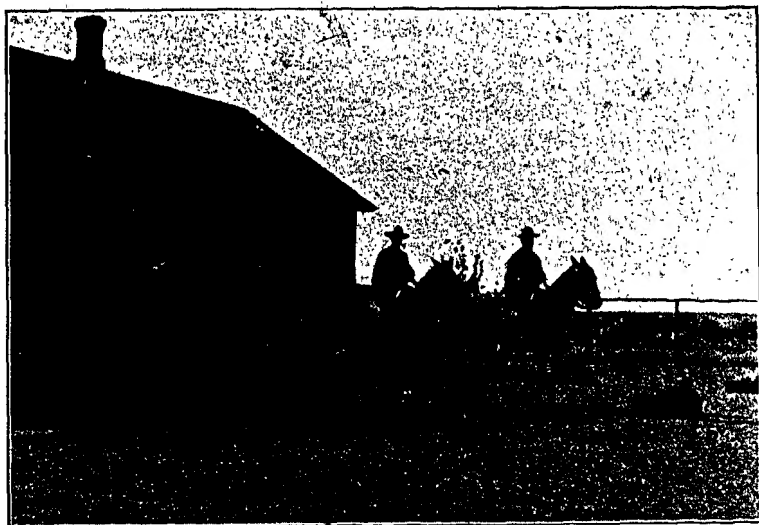


It is approximately closer now than it was, owing to Taste. the greater number and improved quality of the immigrants constantly arriving, and to increased communication with the old home. This last improvement is itself due partly to cheaper postage and more frequent mails, and partly to the better education of the people who have these facilities at their command.

As for the educational system of the West itself, Education. enormous strides have been made in the last few years.

Provincial Universities have been established in both Alberta and Saskatchewan by legislatures chiefly composed of farmers. High schools have risen in the towns, and elementary schools are dotted all over the land wherever a mere handful of children can be gathered together. The authorities are honestly trying not merely to imitate the methods of older lands, but to avoid the errors and to profit by the ideas of the greatest educational reformers.

In social recreations, too, the West is catching up Recreation. with the East. The western life is strenuous still, and I hope will long continue to demand the hard exertion and develop the versatility which make a powerful race. But in that life-recreation has always played a part, small in summer, larger in winter; and now, in a closer-knit community, opportunities for organized recreation have greatly widened. Holiday resorts attract the



The Royal North West Mounted Police of which Western Canada is Justly Proud. townfolk to breezy lake shores. Metropolitan exhibition grounds draw visitors in tens of thousands. The dollar, though worshipped by many and pursued by nearly all, is not almighty. Men do find time for rest, and even, believe me, for prayer.

The social cleavage that causes grave anxiety at home Social is hardly felt in the West. The man who gives work for Feeling. wages and the man who gives wages for work sit down at the same table, and each learns a good deal from the other,—they learn the old lesson, to begin with that the Lord is not only the maker of them all, but made them very much alike. The lesson is more easily learnt as superficial differences of accent and manner tend to disappear. The cultured Englishman drops the attitude of the "superior person"; the uncultured Englishman picks up the letter H; both inevitably come to speak in the transatlantic way, and associate freely with the transatlantic folk.

Freely, but not intimately with all. We have heard much about English "undesirables" in the West. The West still has plenty of them; but they are less conspicuous than before, in the mass of a better sort. It must frankly be said, that among the British American immigrants also are many undesirables, both and politically and morally; and even the eastern Canadians, American. though they are the backbone of the West, are not all angels. Yet a Britisher who most pungently criticizes the untrustworthiness of certain Americans he has met is careful to assure me that he likes all his American neighbours very well—"They're an awful nice bunch." Birds of a feather flock together.

Though the educated Englishman in many districts still feels the lack of society precisely of this sort, the scarcity is not so acute as it was, and there are educated Canadians as well as Englishmen who help to fill the void. The welding of British and American by marriage has begun in the West,—it has been going on a very long time in the East,—and in time to come it may be a powerful pacific factor in the solution of grave national problems.

The marvellous pace of western towns has carried them to a stage of civilization which deserves study even more than it compels wonder. In six years Winnipeg has increased its population from 90,153 to nearly 200,000; Regina, from 6,169 to about 40,000; Calgary, from 11,967 to 63,000; Edmonton (including Strathcona), from 14,088 to 53,000; the infant Saskatoon, from 3,011 to 27,000. Merely counting heads, these last four only rank with second-rate English towns; but in commercial vigour and success, in general liveliness and enterprise, there is no comparison. In any one of them today you feel yourself in a city, a centre of life, not an overgrown village. I shall have to speak of these communities in more detail later on.

In this little book there is no room to speak of the smaller places, yet they do astonishing things. One little town, only founded in 1905, has just spent £6,000 on an electric power-house; another, which in 1908 put up a £1,600 school, had to replace it in 1911 with a £10,000 building for 300 children. I might fill columns with wonder-tales of huge clearing-house returns, property assessments, and expenditures on electric tramways, lighting, paving, draining, and water-works, and even municipal skating rinks.

Several of the western towns have already a large wholesale business. Even manufactures are becoming important, in spite of very high wages. Some of these industries, such as the The Home meat-packing concerns in Alberta, and the creameries Market. established at many points by Government enterprise, are for the working up of the farmers' raw material. For the matter of that, the farmer finds a valuable opening for his raw material in every townsman's mouth.

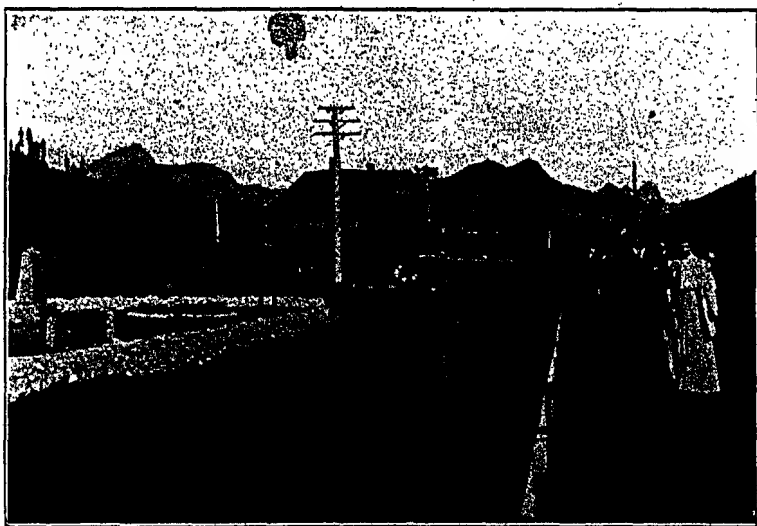
These towns differ most vitally from ours in having practically no poor. Everyone can afford to gratify an appetite keen-whetted by the bracing western air. The food demand, in some lines, keeps far ahead of the local supply. Edmonton, in the midst of an ideal district for dairying, buys cream from a distance of 150 miles, and condensed milk is still largely used. Winnipeg even draws milk from the State of Dakota. What with the rapid growth of towns and villages and the equally rapid construction of railways, the farmer has no trouble in disposing of everything he can grow, either in the home market or in the outer world. The money he gets for it he commonly invests in more land and machinery and stock, besides paying the instalments due on what he has already; but he has a good deal left for the merchant after all.

Defects and drawbacks still remain. Settlers are far too thinly

scattered over a great portion of the plains. Labour is scarce, and likely to be more so when poor homesteaders, now glad to work for their neighbours, can afford to stay on their own farms and become employers themselves. Immigrants of good quality, whether they have money or not, are more valuable to Canada economically, socially and political-

**Surviving** ly, than undesirable characters who come with large capital. The shortage of teachers is almost as serious as the shortage of farm workers. In many a rural school all grades have to be taught by a young woman of little training or experience. Rural medical service requires stimulation, by Government aid or organization if necessary, in new districts. As for the extension of rural telephones, it cannot be pushed on too fast. The worst insect pest is the mosquito. Though his season is short, and he does not carry malaria-like his southern cousin, he well deserves the attention of scientific investigators who might tell us whether any plan of campaign could possibly prevail against him. Meanwhile there are wire screens for doors and windows.

It is happily true, after every allowance is made, that the tremendous pace of the last few years has brought Western Canada to a state of prosperity too widely spread and too well-rooted to be seriously impaired by any trouble that can easily be conceived.



Laggan, Alberta, on the Line of the Canadian Pacific Railway and at the Eastern Entrance of the Rocky Mountains.

## CHAPTER II

### GRAIN-GROWING BY FARM ENGINEERS.

A swarthy monster with fiery eyes came crawling over the prairie, puffing gently as it rolled along. I was crossing the civilized twentieth-century province of Saskatchewan in a motor car "with all the latest improvements," or I might have imagined myself back in the legendary land of dragons.

"No," my companion said, "it's just Mr. So-and-So's breaking outfit." That is what farming has come to in the Canadian West. It is no longer an inherited art but a modern science, and a mechanical science at that. There is, of course, a vast

**Agricultural  
Mechanica.**

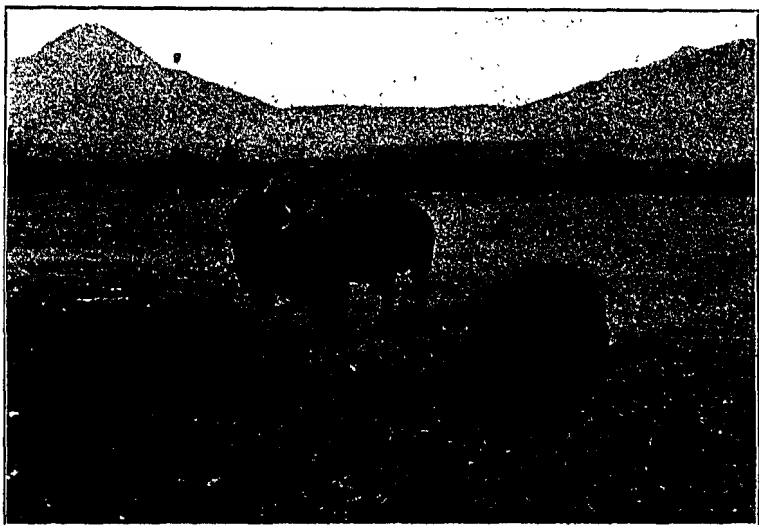
amount of more primitive farming in the West; even on the dry open prairie the majority of cultivators have neither land nor capital enough to adopt the latest methods. The man who does adopt these methods, for cultivation on the grand scale,—well, it seems almost absurd to call him a farmer. The agricultural community of the West is divided into two classes, which certainly often overlap but are nevertheless pretty clearly defined. The "grain-grower" does not think himself much complimented if you call him a "farmer"; and the farmer speaks with humorous contempt of the grain-grower as a mere "wheat miner," whose proceedings are also reprobated in some quarters as leading to the exhaustion of the soil's fertility.

That engine ploughing all day and all night illustrates and registers the stage attained by the grain-grower in raising—or reducing, if you will—agriculture to the level of a great manufacturing industry, carried on with all the mechanical skill, the financial ability, the mathematical calculation, which would naturally be devoted to any great industry carried on under a factory roof. The Americans showed the way; they had developed this method in their own earlier-settled West, and naturally brought it with them when they migrated to the better and cheaper land on the British side of the frontier. Indeed, some of them are carrying it on in Canada without coming to live there at all, just as other American capitalists are investing money in other manufacturing concerns on Canadian soil. I came across the representative of a Chicago syndicate driving over the Canadian prairie looking for a few thousand acres of land where they intended to lay down all the necessary outfit of machinery and skilled labour and management to produce wheat by the most scientific process and get the highest financial return. In a town a little further east, a gasoline traction engine was just setting out with a train of six waggons behind it, loaded with machinery, corrugated iron for roofs, and supplies of all sorts, for an estate of 26 sections (16,640 acres) owned by a land company. About 12,000 acres had been put under wheat and oats and flax, and one of the finest and heaviest crops in the west was being harvested.

A few miles from the city of Saskatoon I visited one of the "farms" of a Norwegian who went as a young man to the States, spent 20 years there, came over the border five or six years ago, and made money in land-dealing. He was not content only to sell land for others to use. Big stretches of it he is cultivating, and cultivating magnificently. On the place I visited he had put 1,400 acres under wheat, which promised an average of 30 bushels an acre the 42,000 bushels. Also 300 acres of flax, with an average of 17 bushels, making another £2,125, the price being \$2.00 (8s. 4d.) a bushel. Also 100 acres of oats, producing about 9,500 bushels, for his live stock. A gasoline engine was pulling four binders, each of which was reaping an 8-foot swath of wheat, until we arrived, when the men stopped for a "tea" of coffee and currant bread. A little way off stood a neat white wooden house, where the resident manager lived; a big stable for 20 horses; an ice house, the ice being cut from the Saskatchewan river in winter; and a pig house, clean as a dining room, with a cemented floor below and a staging of boards to which the animals climbed when they wanted (as pigs do) to rest on plenty of straw. On this farm, besides the manager, two or three men are employed all the year round; and seven men (at £7 a month and board and lodging) for the seven "open" months. Extra men are engaged for the harvest at 10s. a day. The engineer gets £15 a month, "all found."

The same owner has another farm of six sections (3,840 acres) which up to 1910 was unbroken prairie, but in 1911 was producing enormous quantities of flax. Flax is the favourite crop for new-broken land. It is grown entirely for the seed, but the practicability of starting a linen industry to utilize the fibre of the stalks is being considered. Samples of fibre are being tested by the Canadian Pacific Railway's agriculturists, and if the quality is not good enough for a textile industry it will be improved by "breeding up." It does seem terribly wasteful to let a vast quantity of valuable material go to destruction year after year. But the seed itself is so profitable that the flax acreage is likely to go up rapidly as long as fresh land is being brought under cultivation. As much of the flax land in the United States is being given up to mixed farming, there seems little reason to fear that prices will fall below the profit line. Nevertheless, this crop draws more heavily on the store of nourishment in the soil than even wheat does, by 20 per cent.; and there is no sign of a stampede of grain-growers from wheat to flax.

The millionaire is not much less rare among "grain-growers" than he is among "farmers," but I have been surprised at the number



In Banff Park, Alberta. Deposed Monarchs of the Plains.

of men engaged in this business on a large scale. Perhaps the example best known here is that of the Canadian Wheat Lands, Ltd., an English company, which has taken over 64,000 acres from the Southern Alberta Land Enterprise. Company and is going to take 56,000 acres more. It has for chairman one who has made a great success of farming in England, and, what is more important, it has got as resident manager the late head of the Dominion Government's experimental farm in Manitoba.

The company only started work in 1911, but when I visited the scene of operations in the autumn of that year 12,000 acres of prairie had been broken,—9,000 ploughed by steam and gasoline engines, the rest by oxen. It was curious to see the two extremes of motive power meeting on one estate,—the very newest thing in traction, and the very oldest. To our eyes, oxen yoked to a plough look primitive; but they are very useful either on patches of land dotted with surface stone,—

rounded lumps dropped from pre-historic floating ice, and rarely too large for a man to lift,—or on fairly steep slopes, the corrugations of a generally flat or gently undulating prairie. As between steam and gasoline engines, the latter seemed to have the advantage, at any rate in 1911, the price of coal having gone up from £1 to £1 20s. a ton because of the strike. It speedily went down again to £1 or £1 4s.

About half that estate will be irrigated by the great Irrigation works of the Southern Alberta Land Company, a "dry and Dry farming" system being carried out on the remainder. Farming. Something like 1,000 acres were sown with winter wheat

in 1911, most of the remaining 11,000 acres of land then broken being prepared for a crop of spring wheat and oats; with a number of experimental crops, such as maize, barley, flax, and garden vegetables. A part of the irrigated area will probably be used for sugar beets, which have succeeded admirably for years past in the Raymond district a little farther south; but perhaps the greatest part will be put under alfalfa, of which two and possibly three crops may be expected annually. Further east, on the Brandon experimental farm, alfalfa yields two heavy crops in the year without irrigation.

The Wheatlands Company will use its alfalfa mostly to feed cattle and sheep; unfinished steers can be bought in the autumn and sold at a very good profit in the spring.

The Southern Alberta Company, I may add here, has a demonstration farm, for the instruction of farmers, and also has a plantation of 100,000 four-year-old trees, of many varieties; which reminds me that in the same district the Canadian Pacific Railway has planted, to protect its line from snow-drifts, double and triple hedges of poplar and maple and willow,—which are far more sightly, as well as more lasting, than the old snow-fences of plank.

The labour question does not seem to have troubled the Wheatlands Company much. By arrangement with the Doukhobor community in Saskatchewan, 40 of those interesting Russian vegetarians had been engaged for the season at \$40 (over £8) a Well-paid month per head. The rest of the ordinary farm labour Labour. was being done by men engaged in the neighbourhood, some of them homesteaders who take this means of earning the capital they need to develop their own quarter sections of free-land; and their pay is \$35 (over £7) a month, with a bonus of £1 a month added in a lump at the end of the season if they stay right through. The engineers are mostly Americans, and get \$4.50 (18s. 9d.) a day each, with an accumulated bonus of 50 cents (2s. 1d.) a day at the season's end, if they stay.

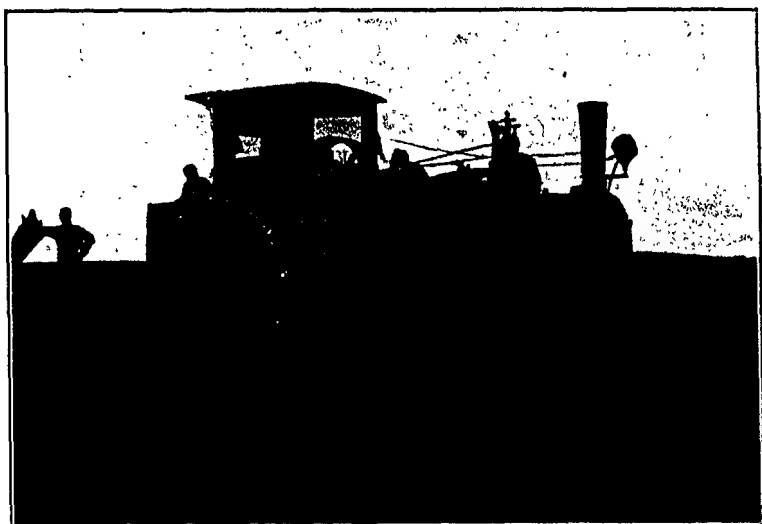
The Company had at the time of my visit 100 draft oxen and 65 mules. A little town was springing up on its land, with a station on the main line of the Canadian Pacific, a considerable hotel, neat little green-roofed wooden houses, shops doing a big business, and even such a luxury as an "ice-cream soda fountain" in the Post Office! Another town, on a new loop line to be built right across the Company's estate by the C. P. R., had already been planned, and, by the time this appears in print, will have sprung into being.

Visiting another district a few hundred miles The further north-east, in Saskatchewan, I came upon a Grain- doctor, who had retired from practice but was actually Grower's doctoring a gasoline engine with as much zest, if not Enthusiasm. as much skill, as he had ever bestowed on a human patient. Presently a worn cog-wheel was replaced, and the monster was rolling along towards the horizon, tearing up and turning over five trips of prairie as it went, and transforming wilderness into farm at the rate of two acres an hour. Nor was this performance at all exceptionally good. The engine was capable of pulling six

ploughs; and there are engines of 110 horse-power pulling as many as twelve.

Two little houses stood near the starting point, with a big tank waggon from which the gasolene was siphoned into the engine as required, and an ordinary waggon full of timber which a team of mules had just brought out for a third dwelling. The day before, that farm had been untouched virgin prairie, and the doctor had been engaged on another part of his property some miles away. Having made up his mind to get this particular quarter-section (160 acres) into shape as a present to his sister, he simply hitched together by a wire rope the two houses, the waggon, the tank and the ploughs, and hauled them over the prairie with a gasolene engine.

It has a psychological as well as agricultural interest, this machine farming. Here was an educated man, born and brought up in a beautiful country-side and moulded to city ways by many years of professional life, nevertheless brimming over with enthusiasm for what a non-plainsman might be excused for thinking the least interesting form of agriculture in the least interesting sort of district. His enthusiasm, I fancy, was fed from several springs. To begin with, the pure prairie air is wonderfully bracing and exhilarating even in the great heat of a summer afternoon; a man's energy is nourished and



The Iron Horse Used by Farm Engineers.

spurred by the sense of boundless opportunity and free scope for intelligence and energy; and, while opportunity and scope are to be found in almost all parts of Canada, they are writ large, printed in big capital letters, so to speak, all over the boundless expanse of earth and sky stretching away on all sides as you stand on the western plain. Something of this exhilaration comes to almost everyone, no matter how wedded to the varied beauty of hill and dale and copse and hedgerow. It comes with double force to the man who owns the land, hundreds of thousands of acres of it, with the means at his command to develop its capacity to the utmost, and the knowledge that, when so developed, it is bound to bring him wealth. To a man of broad human sympathies and imagination, like my friend the doctor, there is an added stimulus in the realization that every throb of his engine means so much more waste land reclaimed for the feeding of mankind.

On this estate the engines are not kept running all the time, but knock off for five hours at night. Two men, turn and turn about, work each engine: A. starts at 3 a. m. and comes off for breakfast and rest at 5; B. then takes his place, works till 9, and then lies off till after dinner, when he again relieves A.; and so on. The second man to come on in the morning takes the last turn at night, and makes any little repairs or adjustments needed to put the engine in trim for the next day's start. One capable man seems to have no trouble in running the whole outfit by himself; sometimes standing up at the wheel, occasionally stepping back on to the platform to adjust the levers of any of the five heavy ploughs. The thing is as nearly as possible automatic. The engine steers itself, by means of a little wheel projecting in front and running in the outermost of the five furrows cut on the previous journey.

My friend's plan of cultivation is to follow up the ploughing the same year with a double discing and double harrowing, all in one operation, along the plough lines, and then repeat the operation across. Instead of going over the ground twice with discs and harrows like this, many are content to run an engine over it once, hauling a great "float" or land raft of logs, 24 feet wide and heavily loaded with stones.

The gasoline engine does almost everything that has to be done on the land—or off. It ploughs and cultivates the soil, drills in the seed (though some object to its use for this purpose), reaps and binds the crop, works the threshing machine, and hauls the grain to the elevator at the station. One such 30 horse-power engine, costing about £660 laid down in that remote district, will take care of three sections,—that is, 1,920 acres. If a man has only one section, 640 acres, it may still pay him well to farm by gasoline, for he will probably find plenty of neighbours ready to hire him and his engine to work or partly work their land by contract. I know one man who made £160 in this way in a single season. It must be said, however, that its profit depends largely on the care he takes of it. Some write off 25 per cent. of its value annually; but the engine's "life" is much more than four years if it is worked by a man who knows his business and housed securely through the winter. Some of the makers send experts over the country giving lessons to farmers, who want to be their own engineers. A grain-grower of my acquaintance has sent his nephew (who is also his manager) to spend the winter in the factory where his engines are made. The working of an engine has actually taken its place in the curriculum of advanced agricultural education. The first buildings of Saskatchewan's Provincial University are those of the agricultural faculty; and special instruction in "agricultural mechanics" is given there.

The grain-grower just mentioned spends only the summer on the prairie. Once his crop is in the elevator and off his hands, he runs his engines under cover, houses his two pair of mules in a livery stable at the nearest town, and goes off to spend the winter in the city of his choice, hundreds of miles away. He thinks bye and bye of putting up a little farm-house and keeping a man there all the year round so that mules and machinery can all be cared for where they belong; but he has no intention of spending the winter there himself,—nor has he any need, for the handsome profits of the summer's crop enable him to spend the rest of the year, wherever and however he likes.

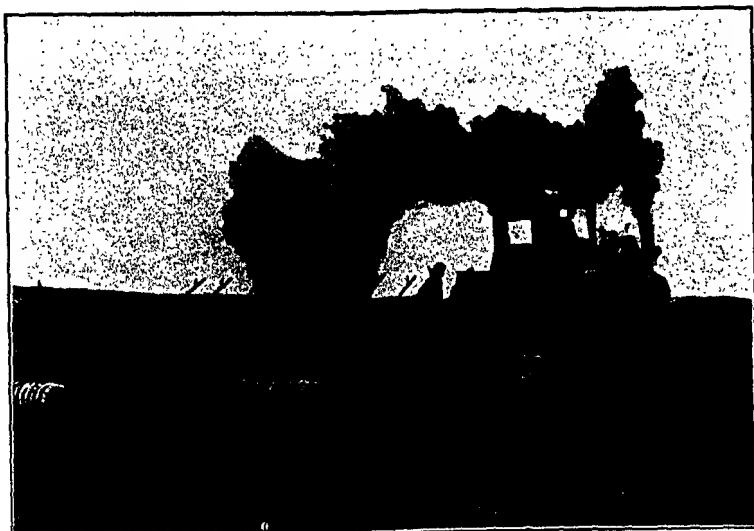
In many cases a single good year's crop has paid the whole cost of the land. An instance occurs to me of a man who bought a slice of prairie at £5 an acre, broke 2,000 acres at once, and the next year harvested enough wheat to pay all expenses of cultivation and threshing and marketing and make a profit of £6 an acre besides. That



was a very exceptional crop, averaging 40 bushels to the acre in many parts; the next crop was not quite so good, and the third was poor, owing to drought. Twenty bushels would be considered a fair crop; but in a good year, under a good system of cultivation, from 30 to 40 bushels may be reasonably expected. As for exceptional crops, I might tell of an average of 50 bushels raised from a measured 20 acres, and even of 60 bushels raised from one acre in Southern

Alberta under peculiarly favourable conditions. Now that cultivators have learnt how to preserve from undue evaporation such moisture as even a dry season brings, the danger of loss by drought has been vastly diminished; and even when such loss does come, the result of an average series of good and bad years is eminently satisfactory. The "packer" is coming into very general use. It leaves a fine loose surface, a sort of dust blanket, while compressing the soil just below.

The difference between the results achieved by different men under identically the same natural conditions is very striking. In one very new district in 1911 I found nearly all the farmers reporting (I was going to say "complaining," but no one complains) that they had got no wheat crop in 1910 owing to the drought. In the very



Plowing and Discing on the Canadian Prairie.

middle of them, I found a farmer who had got 1,300 bushels, the average yield running from 10 to 14 bushels an acre on different parts of his land. That land had not received a drop more moisture than the fields around it. The difference was in the way it had been worked. Its owner was a wide-awake man, a welcomer and practiser of innovations. I saw in front of his house a good big patch of some special variety of wheat he was raising experimentally for seed.

On the same farm I saw a 20-acre stretch of flax that a night frost had nipped. "That's nothing," the owner said. "I put it in very late, and quite expected it to get caught. But my main crop of flax, 230 acres, is all right, because I got it in early." And so was his wheat, in spite of the exceptionally wet summer which all over the West delayed the ripening of the grain.

Here we have come face to face with another very striking sign of progress in the West. The drawbacks which "can't be cured" and

must be endured" are being conquered one by one, and those which remain are being whittled down. No one has yet discovered how to ward off a hailstorm; but its effect can be insured against. You cannot eradicate the gopher's appetite for a growing crop, but you can eradicate the gopher himself, or at any rate so reduce his numbers by poison and trap that he is no longer seriously to be feared. It is still questionable whether the spread of settlement and cultivation is appreciably modifying either the rainfall or the temperature; but if a long, dry spell cannot be averted, it can be provided against, as I have shown, by saving from evaporation the moisture already in the ground; and by early sowing the crop can generally be ripened before the first frost is due, even in a wet and backward season.

These things are more easily said than done; but they can be done, and they are being done more and more as the farmers acquire the necessary knowledge and increased means. The shortage of labour at harvest time will doubtless be overcome partly by the inventiveness of machine-makers, and partly by the power of governments to draw more largely on the labour markets of the world. Meanwhile the effect of such shortage can be minimized by stacking the grain, so that the threshing will no longer have to be crowded into the short periods between reaping and snowfall. The shortage of accommodation for the threshed grain in elevators and railway cars can be remedied not merely by the increase of that accommodation, and by the opening of a new export route through Hudson Bay, but by the erection of cheap granaries on the farm itself.

One of the greatest triumphs over the grain-grower's difficulties appears to have been achieved by the invention of a new wheat, called the Marquis. Hitherto, the early ripening varieties have not yielded the highest quality of grain; and the best variety, the Red Fife,—which all the world covets—has taken longest to ripen. Now, thanks to the Dominion Government's agricultural experimenters, a wheat has been invented which yields the highest quality and largest quantity of grain and yet ripens as quickly as any.

The Marquis is a cross between the Red Fife and the hard Red Calcutta. According to the Saskatchewan Government's final report on the crops of 1911, "it ripens about 7 to 10 days earlier than the Red Fife"; "it appears to be very resistant to rust"; and "milling and baking tests show that this wheat is the equal of Red Fife for bread-making."

Imagine what it would have meant to Western Canada in a wet season like that of 1911, if the wheat had ripened eight or nine days earlier!

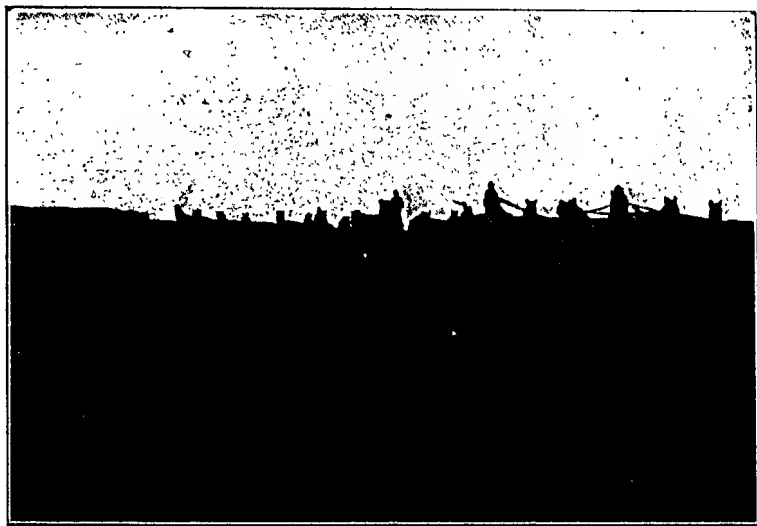
The Marquis appears to have been thoroughly tested at the Indian Head Experimental Farm. Here are the results, showing its average yield per acre, and the average time it took to mature, with the corresponding results of four other leading varieties grown side by side with it under exactly similar conditions:

Variety	Average Days to Mature.	Days Earlier than Red Fife.	Average Yield per Acre.	
			Bushels.	Lbs.
Preston	127	7	33	52
Huron	125	9	32	51
Stanley	128	6	31	48
Red Fife	134	—	31	22
Marquis	125	9	39	25

It was this same Marquis, by the way, which carried off the big prize offered by Sir Thomas Shaughnessy for the best hundred pounds of milling wheat grown on the American Continent in 1910-11. Not

one of the judges was a Canadian; they all belonged to the United States, and yet they could not find among the wheat exhibits sent in by their own countrymen anything to equal the Canadian Marquis grown in Saskatchewan by an Englishman from the Isle of Wight. Well might the Saskatchewan Parliament resolve, as it unanimously did, to congratulate both the originator of the new wheat, Dr. Saunders, of the Ottawa Experimental Farm, and the grower of the victorious sample, Mr. Seager Wheeler, of Rosthern. Since then another remarkable wheat has been produced, called the Prelude.

Let me give, before I close this chapter, a few facts from the experience of a man engaged in grain-growing in another district. I found him and his wife living in a wooden box eight or nine feet square. It was really a granary, and was no doubt full of wheat soon after my visit. If the farmers would all put up granaries, they would not be compelled to rush their grain to market as soon as it is threshed, and would not be "in a hole" when the elevators are all full and the railways cannot handle all the grain clamouring for removal. This man had come up from Eastern Canada five years before. The first year, he broke little more than five acres, having cattle to look after and no spare cash to pay others—as many do—to break land for him at 12s. or 16s. an acre. The second year, he had about 20 acres under wheat,



Seeding and Harrowing with Four-Horse Teams.

oats and potatoes. In the fifth year he cropped 300 acres. He had £1,200 worth of machinery,—the largest items, such as the 22 h. p. £600 gasolene engine, being paid for in three annual instalments. Thus equipped, he can not only cultivate his own land to its utmost capacity, but make money by cultivating, or at any rate breaking, other people's land for them. The gentleman in the granary does not use his engine when drilling seed; but he makes it do wonders at other times. It breaks the virgin sod with six 14-inch ploughs. It reduces the broken ground to a seed-bed by twice dragging over it a "planker" or "float" of timber, 24 feet wide, with three 8-foot sets of disc harrows behind. It reaps one crop and ploughs the soil for the next, in a single operation. It had even hauled the little house and three other buildings several miles over the plain, on skids.

This man confessed to me that he had a hard time at first; his cattle were stable animals from the East, and did not do as well as

the hardy plain-roamers of the West; indeed, he would have turned back to Ontario if he had not sold his place there. "But now," he said, "I see that, whereas I used to handle £200 a year, last year I handled £1,400."

The title "automatic farming," which I have applied, with a touch of perhaps excusable exaggeration, to the new system of wholesale grain-growing by machinery, is likely to be much nearer the truth a year or two hence. At present the very ease with which a man can rapidly put vast areas under cultivation brings a danger with it. He is tempted to "bite off more than he can chew"—to put in more grain than he can reap and thresh, human labour being as scarce as it is. The common practice is not to stack the wheat and thresh at leisure from the stack, but to pile the sheaves in little stooks to be threshed in the field. At harvest time, therefore, at least 8 and sometimes possibly 17 men per engine have to be employed,—one on the engine itself, one on each of the four binders, and from three to twelve (according as the crop is light or heavy) following to pick up and stook the sheaves. The implement makers have now invented a device for stooking by machinery; and when such a device proves completely successful it will more than half solve the labour problem, which is growing more and more serious with every harvest.

## CHAPTER III

### " MIXED FARMING."

"Robbing the country" is the uncomplimentary phrase in which an agricultural expert of Alberta sums up his opinion of the policy followed by the typical grain-grower of Western Canada and described in the last chapter as "automatic farming."

It is indeed, a curious fact, or pair of facts, that while one very striking sign of progress is the enormous use of machinery for grain-growing by wholesale, a still more hopeful (though less sensational) sign of progress is the reaction against continuous grain-growing and the adoption of mixed farming by an increased number of far-sighted men.

"I have no objection," my friend says, "to the gasoline traction engine for breaking the raw prairie, cultivating, reaping, and so on. I use one myself. But the exclusive and wholesale raising of wheat year after year from the same soil will reduce our fertile

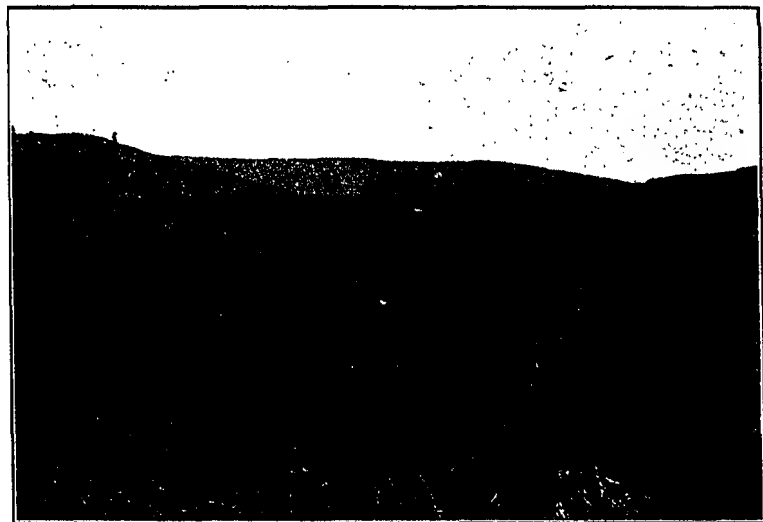
**An Expert's Opinion.** plains in time to the condition of the plains on the other side of the American frontier, once equally fertile. Thirty-five years ago the great alluvial deposit in the Red River valley was producing 30 bushels an acre,—now it yields 13. The people have been continuously removing the potash and phosphates and nitrates from the earth and putting nothing back. They have sold the fertility of the soil. Every ton of wheat they sell carries off with it an amount of plant food which can't be replaced for less than £1. I don't want to see our farmers compelled to buy commercial fertilizers, as they will be if they go on with wheat, wheat, wheat. And it is totally unnecessary, too.

**The Land Needs Grain At First.** "I admit," he continues, "that on newly broken land grain-growing is allowable. Indeed, it is plainly the right policy. The mass of raw plant food that you turn over at the first ploughing of the virgin prairie must be allowed to decay. It takes at least three years to dispose of that raw sod. After breaking, and pack-

ing and cultivating, nothing more should be done to it the first season, unless a man positively cannot afford to wait. The next year, put in flax; nothing else does so well on fresh broken ground. Then take off a couple of crops of wheat or oats.

"I admit, too, that grain pays better than other crops for a few years after that. But at the end of, say, ten years the mere grain-grower will find himself worse off than if he had gone in for live stock and adopted a rotation of crops."

The apostles of scientific rotation, however, do not expect to make converts wholesale. The old system of "soil robbery" is too lucrative, in spite of bad seasons, and the farmers do not feel any particular responsibility for the future of their land. Long before it plays out, they or their sons will have sold it and taken fresher land elsewhere. Some of them not only act, but often speak, as if they thought it never would play out; and they are encouraged by the soil's magnificent initial fertility. "This is my twenty-second crop of wheat off the same land," said one farmer when I was in Manitoba, "and it is the best. It looks as if the land was just getting into its stride." And a Saskatchewan farmer in the dry season of 1910 raised an average of 25-bushels of wheat per acre on land that had been cultivated for 25 years.



Oats in Stook Awaiting the Thresher.

Yet the question is more urgent that such pleasing experiences would lead you to believe,—is the soil's fertility to be exhausted or not? In England the land has come down to its present holders through a long line of men who have earned a sort of prescriptive right to do as they like with their own. But even there, if proper cultivation were not insisted on by landlords, the State might legitimately insist upon it. In Western Canada, 45 years ago, the whole of the land, except the proportion which the Hudson's Bay Company retained of its ancient estate, became the absolute property of the Canadian people, represented by the Federal Government. That Government has given away millions of acres to homesteaders, who have only to live on their land three years and put a small part of it under crop in order to become absolute owners. But is it just to the countless generations who must follow them, and who will have no other free land to migrate to, that the very first generation of occupiers should destroy half of its fertility? The community has already limited the individual

owner's rights by a law that he shall not allow certain weeds to grow on his land. Should he not be further forbidden to grow wheat or flax so recklessly as to lessen the productive capacity of the soil, on which the country's prosperity so largely depends?

The prophets of good farming, however, are not agitating for compulsion, but trying to convert the prodigal farmer by exhortation and example. It is interesting to see the number of alternatives they put before him.

To begin with, if he insists on growing only grain, he is warned at any rate to "summer fallow." And this he very commonly does, finding it immediately advantageous to his own pocket. The crudest method is to let a fourth or a third or a half of the land lie fallow each year. In some of the driest districts of the United States, men have learnt by painful experience that they must not attempt to crop more than a third of the land in any one year. The object of "summer fallowing" in such cases is not so much to preserve the plant food in the soil as to save up its moisture. Experiments in Montana show that of 13 inches of rain falling in one season no less than 8 inches can be preserved for the next season by cultivating immediately after every shower, leaving a fine loose surface, a sort of earth blanket, to check evaporation. Where there is a good deal of wind, as on the south-western prairies, there is a tendency for the cultivated surface under summer fallow to blow and drift in dry weather; and the remedy for this has been found in the use of the surface packer.

Mere summer fallowing, however, is only tolerated as a poor second-best, not admitted for a moment as scientific or economical, by the agriculturally educated men. "Rotation of crops must come," they say, "and the sooner the better." A considerable number of the more progressive farmers have adopted it already; but they are a very small percentage of the whole farming community. The head of one of the Canadian Government's experimental farms in the West tells me that the two best systems in use are these:—

(A) Two crops of wheat, followed by one of maize, one of barley, and one of clover hay sown with or just after the barley.

(B) Two years of wheat, followed by one of oats, one of mixed grass and clover hay sown with the oats, one year of pasture, and one of maize.

The maize is manured, and this benefits also the following crop; in fact, the maize year is as beneficial as a year of summer fallow, on good land. Incidentally, it may be said that on the good land of an experimental farm artificial fertilizers have been tried with absolutely negative results.

A third rotation system runs thus:—

One year of wheat, one of oats, one of barley and one of summer fallow. This, however, returns nothing to the land. The plan is improved, therefore, by sowing clover with the barley, and allowing it to remain for two or three years.

The maize is as purely a fodder crop as the clover. Both, therefore, imply the keeping of live stock; and here we come to a real preventive of the danger threatening Western Canada.

So breathless is the pace of the West, so bewildering its transformations, that it seems but yesterday we thought of the prairie as a stock-raising country and nothing else. And now, just as we have got used to thinking of it as one illimitable waving grain-field, we are

told that its future prosperity will largely depend on live stock after all.

We are not to imagine that the third era will resemble the first. The great herds of cattle that roamed by tens of thousands over a plain still white with the bones of the buffalo, when I first rode through the West on an Indian pony, are now almost as extinct as the buffalo were then. Yet the number of cattle is actually greater than in the old ranching days. Nor does this mean that the big ranch has been cut up into hundreds of mixed farms, each with its dozen or score of cows. The big ranch has been cut up, it is true; but most of the small homesteaders are merely grain-growers, with a few oxen and horses to do the work; many of them without a single cow, nor one beef steer.

The stock-raising industry, nevertheless, has survived, and, where scientifically and sensibly managed, is doing remarkably well. The cowboy is not extinct yet, though, like the buffalo, he no longer has the whole boundless prairie to range over with his herd. The Cattle King has abdicated his royalty, his kingdom has shrunk to a few square miles; but he survives in the guise of a simple citizen.

Many of the old ranchmen were inclined to throw up the sponge, with a despairing growl at the incoming flood of homesteaders who



Threshing from the Stooks. (Pile of Chaff in the Background.)

insisted on fencing off bits of the range, and at the authorities who allowed this to be done. Some of them moved away to the few tracts of comparatively poor land where cattle leases at a nominal rent were still granted. Others reluctantly took to mixed farming, and many of these have with more or less difficulty adapted themselves to the new order and "made good." A few had enough land of their own to continue in business.

Here and there, however, you may now find a man who has arrived within recent years, established himself as a genuine cattle rancher and prospered. His prosperity is all the greater, and he is vastly more cheerful, because he has no memory of a "golden age" depressing his spirits and energies like a weight of lead.

The other day I came upon such a man, or rather a couple of men, in the park lands of Central Alberta; and I have rarely carried away more pleasant impressions from any of the multitude of prosperous homes I have visited in the prairie provinces.

Two  
Englishmen  
in Alberta.

They are father and son, and they went out together nine years ago, when the young man was fresh from an English public school.

I found them living in a modest little house with a wide open stretch of prairie in front. Behind, their domain was wooded, and ran back over a railway line to a beautiful lake whence rose a range of sandy hills dotted with trees. The house was almost as plain within as without.

and the house-keeping was patriarchal in its simplicity; but everything was clean and tidy, and there were plenty of other indications (such as The Times sent out daily from London) of the ideal so often praised and so seldom realized,—high thinking and plain living.

At meals the father sat at the head of the table and his son at the foot, with eight or nine hired men between them; and the arrangement seemed perfectly natural, neither employers nor em-

ployed being at all embarrassed by a companionship which would have been irksome to both if the scene had been an English farm-house. Most of these men were Canadian born, farmers' sons with varying degrees of education, who had themselves taken up homesteads in the neighbourhood and were "working out" like this in order to increase their little capital.

They all slept in a little bunk-house close by; all but one, whose wife did the cooking and then sat at table with the rest. One or two were English, but they were evidently acquiring the proper transatlantic feeling that "a man's a man for a' that"; and neither the Englishmen nor the Canadians were prevented by this wholesome self-respect from according an equally wholesome though not servile respect to their employers. Hay-making was in progress during my visit; that accounted for the number of men. At such a time, a man's wage is £8 a month,—the ordinary wage being £7 in summer and £6 in winter; always with board and lodging thrown in. One man is kept on the whole year, and in summer there are generally two or three on the place.

My two friends spent their first two years in the country prospecting. In summer they camped out, travelling round with a pair-horse waggon and a tent, and in winter they stayed with other ranchmen.

At last they came to the beautiful lake, and on a hill rising from its shore they built their first log-house. Each took a free homestead of 160 acres; they bought from the Canadian Pacific Railway an adjoining half-section, 320 acres, paying 25s. an acre; two years ago they each exercised the homesteader's right to buy an extra 160 acres from the Government at 12s. 6d. an acre; and quite lately they have added another tract of railway land, though the price has risen from 25s. to about £5.

At first they went in exclusively for cattle, buying 80 beasts one or two years old at £3 or £4 a head. Last spring they sold 100 and still had over 100 left. A young steer that they buy for £4 they sell for about £18 two and a half years later. All summer the herd is left to itself, roaming over the prairie wherever it likes, except where fences forbid; and much land still remains unfenced, belonging either to the crown or to railway companies and other private owners who only hold it for sale to settlers.

In the autumn my friends join forces with a handful of neighbours in the same line of business, and ride off for the annual "round up." The whole force is divided into small search parties of two, three, or four, which scatter over the plains in all directions. The beasts occasionally wander 100 miles, but generally stay within a radius of 20 or 25 miles. They are found mixed up with the cattle of



many other ranchmen, and the owners cut them out from the bunches with the help of fairly well-trained collies.

All winter the cattle are kept within the fence of the ranch where they belong, sheltering in the poplar or willow bluffs,—willow for preference,—and feed from stacks of hay gathered from a rich meadow watered by a creek. The possession of a natural hay-meadow, low-lying land covered with good thick grass, is a most valuable asset. Some people still let cattle fend for themselves all winter, but in the spring they are in comparatively poor condition, and if the snowfall is much heavier than usual they starve.

This last season, these cattle men have added to their stock a bunch of heavy horses, for which there is a great demand among the settlers. This has involved the building of a stable, but the colts are only fed for the first winter,—after that they can run wild till ready for sale as three-year-olds at £80 or so a pair. The snow does not baffle them as it does the stupid kine; they know the grass is there, whether they can see it or not, and they have the sense to paw the snow away. Nor is there any other enemy seriously to be feared.



In the Park-Like District where Mixed Farming is Receiving Greater Attention.

A traveller in this region more than 60 years ago, in the days of the buffalo and long before the country began to be settled, has left a record of wolves—the real “timber wolves” of the forest—attacking a bunch of horses and killing some; but the battle was not a one-sided affair for the horses showed fight and kicked many of their assailants to death. The coyote, or prairie wolf, is a coward who only attacks a sickly calf or foal gone astray. “Swamp fever” carries off a certain number of horses in some parts, but in this district there has been no case for several years. Among the cattle, “black leg” has sometimes attacked a calf or two-year-old, proving rapidly fatal; but vaccination appears to be effective. The country indeed seems almost ideally healthy for all sorts of livestock.

They do not pretend to be farmers, these ranchmen; but they have to cultivate 50 acres each as a condition of getting their title deeds for

**Fodder Crops.** the purchased homesteads. Accordingly, they are growing oats, which are cut green as a fodder crop or, if threshed, provide a straw which makes good feed. Rations of grain and straw make the cattle fit for sale at the age of three instead of four years. Clearly, as free range becomes more and more restricted, it will be less and less needed.

As settlement becomes closer, of course, the social opportunities of the neighbourhood are enlarged. When my friends pitched their tent here first, they had to drive 50 miles to the nearest town for the mails, once a fortnight; now a mail arrives daily at the railway station only a mile away. Supplies had to be freighted in by waggon, and were very dear. Today, though the "station" is still only a stopping place on the line without buildings, there is a "general store" opposite; and though groceries as a rule are high enough, you can get a hundred-pound bag of flour for 14s. 7d., 20 pounds of sugar for 5s. 2d., bacon for 10d. or 1s. a pound, butter for 7½ or 10d. in summer and 1s. 3d. or 1s. 5d. in winter, beef for 5d. or 7½d., and mutton for 10d.

For the first two winters the only neighbours were a party of railway engineers camping a mile away, and very agreeable company they were. Now there are several families of educated English folk within easy reach, and some of the new Canadian and American settlers also are decidedly companionable. At a village a few miles off there is a plain but well-kept restaurant with a hall where the ranchers and their neighbours gather for such high jinks as a concert, a dance, or even an amateur dramatic performance. As I write, I hear from one of my friends that a fancy dress ball has just come off with great success. Miss So-and-So appeared as a fascinating "Quaker Girl," and Mr. What's-his-Name played the perfect pierrot. When I saw them last, the young lady was peeling potatoes in her uncle's farm-house, the gentleman attending to his own horses and cattle, and neither sacrificing an ounce of gentility in the process. "But," as one of my friends feelingly observes, "we should be delighted if a few more English public school men of the right stamp would come along and join us."

That ranching friend of mine is already a long step in advance of the men who sell their cattle straight off the prairie in autumn for whatever they will fetch; for **Stockman's Progress.** by feeding his beasts all winter he not only makes them weigh more but gets a penny a pound more for their whole live weight in the spring. If he had no free range to supplement his meadow hay, he would go in far more heavily for the cultivation of fodder crops.

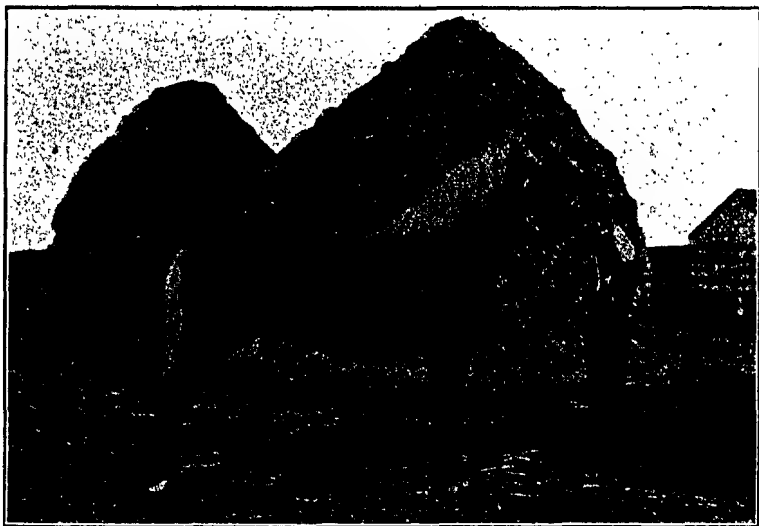
That is the next step upward for the live-stock man. If **The Next Step.** he has to raise food for them by cultivation, he naturally wants better beasts to repay the expense; and they much more than repay the expense. On the dry plains of the south-west, where the old ranching industry chiefly flourished in the days when cattle not only required but got 15 acres a head to graze on, an extensive stock business has come into existence, and it promises to achieve an even more striking success, thanks to such great irrigation schemes as the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Southern Alberta Land Company are bringing to completion. The basis of this industry will be alfalfa, of which, as I said in a previous chapter, **Alfalfa** two crops are easily raised in the one season, aggregating 3 tons per acre, and far more than that is to be confidently expected. In the Lethbridge district, where the altitude of the land is less and the alfalfa longer established, three crops have been reaped in a year.

According to one of the chief authorities in Southern Alberta, the

cost of cutting, curing and stacking runs from 4s. 9d. to 6s. 3d. a ton, and alfalfa is worth at least £3 (that was its market price in 1912) as feed for dairy cows, beef cattle, and horses. Here a special ten-year rotation scheme is recommended. Of 1,000 acres, the expert just mentioned will have 600 under alfalfa, 100 under wheat, 100 under oats, 100 under peas, and 100 under barley. Each year he will plough up one-sixth of the alfalfa acreage, and put it under grain, laying down another 100 acres to alfalfa. On land where alfalfa has grown, wheat and other grains yield far more, and sometimes as much again as on soil not thus enriched.

In Saskatchewan, valuable prizes are being offered to encourage the growing of alfalfa. The province has been divided into four districts, and in each district six prizes (from £15 up to £100) will be awarded in 1914, for the best 10-acre field sown in 1912; while a silver trophy worth £50 will be added for the best field in the whole province.

In the park lands, where natural moisture is abundant, and especially in districts where the wild pea-vine luxuriates, the dairy industry finds natural conditions suited to it, and wherever enough milk cows are kept a co-operative creamery can be established with Government support.



A Percheron Stallion—the Pride of its Owner.

In Alberta, where dairying has made particularly good progress, the creameries made 2,315,000 lbs. of butter in 1910, and the make of cheese amounted to 110 tons. About a fourth of the creameries are under the supervision of the Government, which sells the butter and hands over the proceeds (less 2d. a pound) to the farmers who supply the cream. It was a cow belonging to an Alberta farmer (formerly an architect in England), in the Red Deer district between Edmonton and Calgary, who lately beat all the rest of the Empire by her butter-producing record.

The Saskatchewan government also has a number of creameries under its care, and the production of butter is increasing rapidly. The number of milch cows in that province rose from 112,618 in 1906 to 146,500 in 1912. To encourage dairying in districts where butter is not yet made, the Government pays the carriage on cream from the farm to the nearest creamery, and on the empty tins returning.

Where cows are kept for butter, as every one knows, pigs are highly profitable. But, as a matter of fact, men who have gone in for hog-raising have made large profits even without the aid of skim milk. Pigs do magnificently on alfalfa, by the way.

Sheep raising can hardly be described as making progress. The chief difficulty is the coyote, with its voracious appetite, but the cost of shepherding, or of wolf-proof fencing, cannot long outweigh the attractions of this industry. The local demand for mutton is so far ahead of the supply that the Westerners actually import Australian carcasses from the other side of the world, though sheep thrive amazingly on the prairie. They pick up a rich living on poor land that is not worth cultivating,—there is plenty of such land scattered in spots over the fertile plains,—and they are most valuable in keeping down weeds. A little bunch of sheep will presently be recognized as a most profitable side line on a farm chiefly devoted to other industries. A well-fenced fold for shelter by night costs little; and much more use might be made of the well-trained sheep dog.

Poultry keeping is another industry which may be expected to make far greater progress than it has made yet. Here, again, you find the Westerners eating birds which have been carried 1,500 or 2,000 miles, from Eastern Canada. The provincial governments are encouraging the industry by poultry-breeding and fattening stations.

The horse-raising industry is undergoing a development very like that of the cattle industry. I used to see herds of practically wild horses, small but sturdy, which you could pick up at £2 apiece; and I remember my disgust at having to pay £15 for a picked specimen, over the average size, well broken and in the pink of condition, who carried me for hundreds of miles and never wanted any rations beyond the prairie grass. But that was in time of war,—the Riel Rebellion. Today, my friends in that business get £30 or £40 for any fairly good three-year-old which was fed through its first winter but has picked up its own living ever since; while heavy horses fetch £50 or £60, and I have found a man refusing £100 for an extra good one. By breeding only the better sort, a pretty big business can be done on a mere fraction of the acreage required for as many cattle as would bring in the same profit. Free range is therefore losing its importance as the quality of the animal rises.

In the finest wheat districts the very fact that most farmers think of little but grain-growing gives a splendid chance to the man who has broken with their tradition and taken up stock-raising in order to supply his neighbours' demands. Even the wheat-king, who ploughs and reaps his thousands of acres by gasoline engine, needs horses to fetch and carry; the rank and file of the grain-growers need horses or oxen for the whole of their work; and the increasing number who are not content to have all their eggs in the one basket are buying more and more live-stock of every kind.

The phenomenal growth of towns and villages has created a great demand for meat, milk, poultry, eggs, butter, and vegetables,—a demand so much greater than the supply, and so rapidly increasing, that there would be little fear of over-production for many years to come, even if the home market was the only outlet available. There is, in fact, every encouragement for the "prodigal farmer" to return, and for the man who has never committed "soil robbery" to persevere in his virtuous ways.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RESULTS OF EXPERIMENT.

It is certainly not for lack of expert advice and help from his democratic Governments that any farmer fails to improve his methods.

The improvement of farming systems and results is largely due to the agricultural colleges (generally Provincial institutions), as well as to the experimental farm and demonstration farms carried on by the Dominion Government and the land companies; to the farmers' institutes (which may be described as college instruction carried to the farmer's door); and to the direct help given by the authorities in the making and marketing of butter.

There are plenty of people still who scoff at the idea of agricultural education. Here is a typical case. A young man went to Canada after a little preliminary training on the Hon. Rupert Guinness's farm in Surrey, where intending emigrants are initiated in Canadian methods. As he was resolved not only to do well, but to do as well as possible,—a very different thing,—he made up his mind to enter the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph. Writing home to the



Many Western Farmers are Beginning to See the Advantages of Mixed Farming as a Guarantee Against Crop Failure. Sheep Raising is Becoming Increasingly Popular.

manager of the Surrey farm, he says:—

"I was talking the other day to an American (who is a diamond merchant and thinks he knows a lot about farming) and in the course of the conversation I mentioned that I intended to go to the O. A. C.

and work on farms before I settled anywhere, so that I could get a good look at things here before settling definitely. He just went for me when he heard of these ideas of mine. 'Man alive, how can you do a thing like that? Absolutely wasting time. You don't want any scientific farming over here. It is different from the Old

Country. You go out West and get your quarter section from the Government. Then the only thing you want is a plough (or you can hire a man to plough it for you) and a sack of wheat to sow. That is the only thing you need do. The soil out there will take care of itself—doesn't want looking after as it does in Europe. Scientific farming

isn't needed out here. Nearly all the farmers out West didn't know anything about farming before they came here, and look how well they, most of them, are doing now.' He did all he could to get the idea about Guelph out of my head. But I was not fool enough to be discouraged."

Apart from the high value of a college course in broadening the student's outlook and training his intellect to deal more efficiently with any problem he may encounter in life, the splendid results achieved by the college-trained farmer in the actual business of the farm are sufficient answer to all the criticisms of the ignorant. It is

**The Farmers' Institute.** most encouraging to see the increasing number of farmers who send their sons to agricultural colleges and even go themselves for short courses in winter. It is also very satisfactory to notice the thirst for information and zeal

for improvement shown by hundreds of men who come to the Farmers' Institute meetings, where experts give detailed instruction and advice on the various branches of agriculture. In the grain-growing province of Saskatchewan, for instance, during the winter of 1910, there was a total attendance of 1,164 farmers (an average of 30) at 38 meetings, when special instruction was given in dairying and poultry-raising.

**Experimental Farms.** As for the Experimental Farms, everyone allows that the country owes them a debt of gratitude, though few realize what a tremendous debt it is. For many years the staffs of the Federal Government's chief farm at Ottawa and branch farms in the West have been persistently experimenting, and not only discovering what Nature does elsewhere that she might be persuaded to do in Canada, but compelling Nature to do what she has never done before. They have ransacked the world for any new variety of plant life that might enrich the Dominion; and by breeding new varieties they have enriched the world itself. They have spread the knowledge of these results far and wide and have distributed the new and improved varieties themselves among the farmers, who have thus been enabled to repeat the experiments on a scale no longer experimental but commercial and profitable to a high degree.

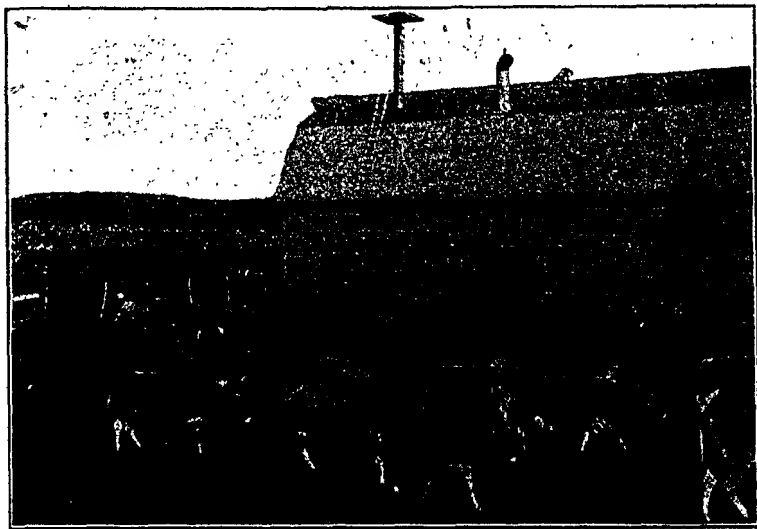
Every Province of the Dominion has learnt, or is learning, how to make the most remunerative use of its particular soil and climate. The orchard, the herd, the flock, the stable, the garden and the field, all have gained amazingly. To take a single example,—by the introduction of the cheese factory and creamery system, millions have been added to the annual income of the farming community. The boon conferred on the grain-growing West by the production of a wheat as good as the best and as early as the earliest, I have already described. For the growing beauty of his home as well as the profit of his land, the Westerner owes much to the Experimental Farm.

**Trees for the Treeless Plain.** The southern prairie, on which the greater part of the population lives, has hitherto been treeless. There were and birch and willow thrive. But by far the greater part practically all the deeply-cut river valleys, where poplar and birch and willow thrive. But by far the greater part of the southern belt, from Eastern Manitoba to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, is "baldheaded prairie." Some of the new settlers, at any rate of those who come from the equally bare expanse just over the United States frontier, think this rather an advantage. The "bluffs" or copses of the "park lands," that stretch across Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan, a little farther north, are in their view merely obstacles to the plough. But even these men admit that a beautiful growth of trees, within easy reach, would be an enormous boon, supplying a great deficiency of fuel and building

material; most of them allow that trees judiciously planted would be valuable as windbreaks; and all but the most hardened utilitarians confess that trees around the home satisfy a natural and healthy craving for the beautiful.

For more than 20 years the Dominion Government's agricultural staff have been testing innumerable trees and shrubs at the Brandon and Indian Head Experimental Farms. The results are most satisfactory. The number of varieties which have proved hardy enough to defy not only the wind but the hardest frost—and the mercury occasionally falls more than 40 degrees below zero—is much larger than was at first anticipated.

Many of these varieties have been got from Northern Russia, Siberia, and even Manchuria. Some of the trees which have proved their capacity to thrive practically all over the settled portions of the West are varieties found wild in parts of Manitoba; but even they need improving, for altitude is an important factor in the problem, and Indian Head is 1,194 feet above sea level, while the prairie goes on rising steadily to a height of 3,000 feet in south-western Alberta even before you begin to ascend the foothills.



A Jersey Herd at Red Deer, Alta., which is Bringing in Good Returns for the Owner.

The pretty "Manitoba Maple" is one of the most successful, and plantations of this variety are now found on homesteads in almost every part of the Prairie Provinces, large quantities of seeds and young trees having been distributed from the experimental farms. The Tartarian maple from Eastern Europe has also proved quite hardy, but its growth is slow and it only reaches a height of 12 to 20 feet. The paper or canoe birch, the American elm, the Russian olive, the black and the green ash, a number of poplars and willows and birches, and the mossy-cup oak, all are thoroughly hardy.

The one of the finest hedges at Brandon is of white spruce—Cone- the Labrador or jack pine, the Scotch pine, the red cedar or Bearers. Virginian juniper, the white cedar, or arbor vitæ, and both the European and American larch, have been acclimatized on the plains, though in some cases most of the early plantings failed.

Among the flowering shrubs, the common lilac succeeds almost

everywhere, and of other successes I may mention the Siberian pea tree, which makes a beautiful hedge; the climbing bitter-sweet, with its clusters of orange-coloured berries; the Siberian dog-Flowering wood, whose branches turn bright red in winter and form Shrubs. a striking contrast with the snow; several Canadian and Asiatic varieties of hawthorn; most of the bush forms of honey-suckle; several spiræas; the snowberry; the Japanese rose, and the European purple-leaved rose. Native and European hops have also proved hardy. A variety of clematis, found wild in Albertan valleys, is grown successfully as an ornamental climber at Calgary, and is quite hardy at Brandon and Indian Head. The Traveller's Joy, a European clematis, has its wood more or less killed in winter, but sends up strong shoots every spring, a practice followed by many other shrubs excluded from the "quite hardy" list.

Among the fruit-producing plants that laugh at the cold are the popular native Saskatoon berry; the barberry, from which a pleasant acid jelly is made; with wild black and red currants; a number of cultivated raspberries; and the wild vine, bearing Fruit. grapes which are "quite palatable" if picked after frost sets in. The little wild plum of the West and the pin-cherry yield fruit that makes good jelly. The native plum, indeed, makes good eating in its natural state.

The greatest triumph, following the greatest effort, is found when we come to the apple. This is the staple fruit of Canada, the most popular among both the Canadians and their customers abroad. Hitherto the Prairie Provinces have been thought incapable of producing apples for themselves, and have drawn their supply from Ontario and British Columbia. It may be many years before this necessity ends, but astonishing progress has been made in that direction by a dogged fight against natural conditions waged for 25 years by the agricultural staff.

They began in 1887 with seed of the *pyrus baccata*, the wild Siberian crab-apple, obtained from the Imperial Botanic Gardens at St. Petersburg. The fruit is only about as big as a cherry, and acid in taste; but the tree was found to have the one quality needed—it was frost-proof.

The flowers of this sturdy little tree were cross-fertilized in Western Canada with pollen from many of the best Results of a commercial varieties of apple grown in Ontario. The seeds First obtained from the first crosses were sown in the autumn of Cross. 1894, and in the following year produced about 160 young trees. In 1899, of the cross-bred trees, 36 bore apples, and five of the new varieties were of such size and quality as to justify further experiment. Moreover, the cross-bred sorts grafted on roots of *pyrus baccata* seedlings proved as hardy as the wild form of *baccata* itself. Meanwhile, in 1896, a series of crosses was begun on another wild crab of the St. Petersburg gardens, *pyrus prunifolia*, which has a fruit nearly twice as large as that of *pyrus baccata*; and in 1902 a third line of experiment was started with *pyrus malus* as a basis—the common crab apple of Europe.

Of the apples resulting from a single cross, 16 varieties of *baccata* and 10 of *prunifolia* origin were considered large enough and good enough for domestic use and deserving more extended trial. Good average specimens of the *baccata* half-breeds are 12 or 14 times heavier than their Siberian parent. The "Columbia," for instance, a cross with the "broad green," is 1.8 inches across and 1.6 inches deep; the "Norman," a cross with one of the most useful of Canadian apples (the McIntosh Red) is over an inch and a half each way. The "Frank," a cross between *prunifolia* and the McMahon White, is over 2 inches across and nearly the same in depth; while the "Golden,"

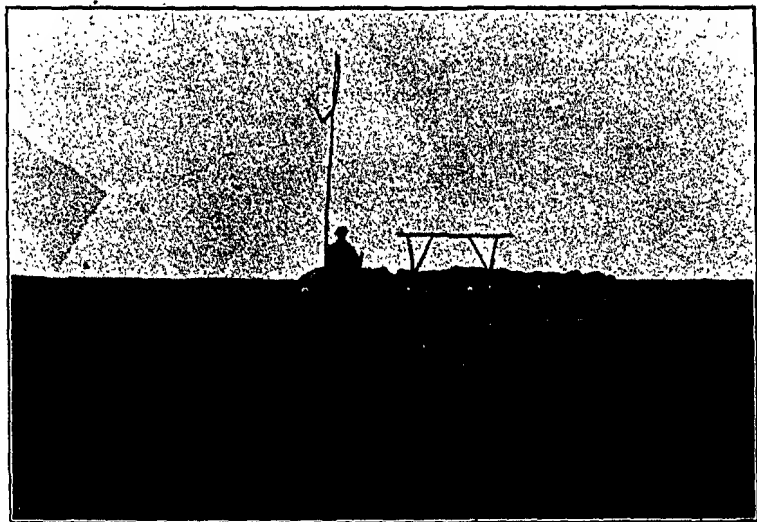


with the golden russet for its Canadian parent, measures an inch and a half each way.

Little experimental orchards of the new varieties were planted in 1902 on about 200 farms, at heights ranging from 740 to 4,200 feet above the sea. Nearly every report describes the tree as quite hardy, and some of them are already bearing fruit.

The first cross, however, is considered important chiefly as the starting point for more ambitious experiments. Many of the best varieties obtained by the first cross have themselves been crossed with high-class apples, in the hope of bringing the fruit gradually up to the size and quality of its Canadian forbears while the tree retains the hardiness of its Siberian grandmother.

From these second crossings, begun in 1904, there are now 407 trees growing at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, and several of them fruited for the first time in 1910. The largest fruit is that of the Martin, a cross of the "Ontario" with the Pioneer, which latter was a cross of baccata with the Tetofsky. The Martin apple averages  $2\frac{1}{4}$  by  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inches; in colour it is a warm orange yellow; its flesh is "white, pleasantly sub-acid, fine-grained, easily breaking, with an agreeable sprightly taste." The tree is "a strong grower and an abundant bearer"; about two-thirds of a bushel of apples were gathered



Making a Beginning with Oxen.

from one small tree planted as a yearling in 1904. The Pioneer was also crossed with the Spy, one of the best apples in existence. The Spy tree itself is very slow to mature; but its child by the Pioneer, named the Margery, has already borne fruit,—smaller than that of the Martin, but good eating when kept till February.

"The indications are," Dr. Saunders says, "that improvements in the size and quality of the fruit will be more rapid in the future than they have been in the past. The large number of second crosses now under trial will, it is expected, furnish material among which suitable sorts may be found which will prove of commercial value in most of the colder parts of Canada."

The number of Western farmers who have taken advantage of the facilities given them to beautify their surroundings, by planting trees obtained from the Experimental Farms, is already very large, and is constantly increasing. Let me describe the home of one of these men as I found it on a recent visit.

The sailor is naturally versatile and adaptive; there is no binding the sea with red tape, and he is perforce accustomed to living in every position, from the horizontal to the vertical, and keeping a cheerful heart at all angles. I was not surprised, therefore, to come across a retired captain installed as master of a farm about 2,000 miles inland, and perfectly at home. He did draw the line at one situation,—the “bald-headed prairie.” Perhaps it was too much like the sea he had left.

At any rate, having the whole wide West to choose from, he chose a spot as much like a beautiful English countryside as possible; and the resemblance was really very close. Sitting on the broad verandah, I looked over a rich and rolling landscape of turf interspersed with patches of woodland, and could almost fancy myself in Surrey or Kent.

The house itself is pretty enough, built bungalow-fashion, with the wooden shingles of the roof painted dark green. It is doing no injustice to the owner's architectural taste, however, to say that the gem of the estate is the garden. It seems only a few years ago that a garden, laid out with any taste, and tended with any skill or care, was the greatest of rarities on a Canadian farm, even in districts settled for a hundred years. Farmers of the new generation in the Eastern Provinces often surround their houses with gardens now, with the help—and under the inspiration—of their wives and daughters.

In the West it cannot be said that a large proportion of the farmers yet indulge in such a luxury. The house generally rises straight from the prairie grass; or, if a little space has been enclosed, it is occupied by “garden stuff” of the eatable sort, with perhaps a few flowers doing what they can for themselves beside the door. But the captain's garden, as I have said, is a gem, or rather a whole collection of gems, gathered from far and near,—natives from just beyond the rustic fence, and immigrants from the old English home. Wild roses, such as bloom all over the prairie, pale pink and rose-red and deep maroon, fill the bed of honour in front of the door. Great dahlias, purple and white petunias, the blazing nasturtium, the modest mignonette, the rich blue scabious, stocks and verbenas, the double larkspur and the Iceland poppy, with a wonderful wealth of sweet-peas rising as a back-ground,—what a feast of colour! Little seedling trees beside the fence have made a good beginning,—the maple, the spruce and the Siberian pea tree, for example. Poplar and willow are all very well, but anyone enterprising enough to introduce variety deserves the thanks of the prairie population.

Behind the house is the first dwelling this family built,—barring the tent they put up when they had just arrived after a fifty-mile struggle of horses against mud.

There was a railway nearer, only 14 miles away, but the trail was bad and a horse would often take three hours covering the distance. A waggon loaded with coils of barbed wire stuck fast when trying to ford a river. The wire had to be transferred to a raft, and it took six oxen to drag the waggon out empty.

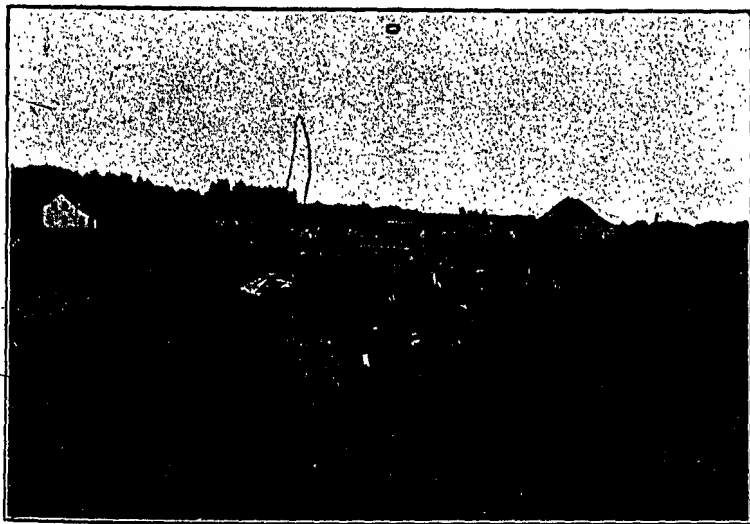
That was only six years ago. The contrast between the old log cabin—now used as a granary—and the beautiful new house, is no greater than the contrast between the country itself in 1907 and 1913. Many neighbours, about half of them English, are within easy reach, and two or three miles off is a post village, with a railway station whence all the cream that the farmers can produce is sent off daily to meet the insatiable demands of luxurious city folk.

Before passing on to speak of town life in the West, let me give one other illustration of country life, in the experience of a bunch of English boys.

English Boys On a Western Farm. Five brothers began by living in partnership. I do not quote their case as proof, either for or against that plan, but merely as an illustration of a family enterprise. Some of them had a little experience; the others were quite green. The two youngest had spent a year on a western farm, but then they took to the bush, and spent a hard winter in a lumber camp. It was no picnic, but at any rate they were good axe-men when they came out of the woods in the spring.

Hard Life Makes Strong Men. Next they hired themselves out to farmers, beginning at £3 a month each and pretty soon earning £5, for by this time they were strong and wiry boys and handled the hay-fork like old-timers. It is wonderful, the effect of hard work in that bracing air. "Fellows come out here all broke up," as one of them says, "and it makes men of them, if there's anything at all in them to begin with."

The five brothers I was speaking of, when at length they joined forces, resolved on taking homesteads, and the two eldest tossed up to decide which should go farther afield, as there was no homestead adjoining. The lot fell upon the younger. After spending three months in a tent with his brothers, they built a sod shack and he went off to "batch it and tent it" on a quarter section he had found a mile



A Comfortable Homestead in Central Saskatchewan.

or two away. He was no axe-man, and spoilt a few pairs of boots before he became one. But in England he had been an engineer, and a motor engineer at that; so presently he invested in a gasoline engine.

"Breaking" Land by Contract. Most of the spring he spends "breaking" prairie for his neighbours, who pay 13s. 6d., 14s. 7d., or 16s. 8d. an acre for this service. The highest of these prices is for rolling or stony land. There is no extra charge for patches of young poplar up to a height of 4 feet, or for willow of the "wolf" or "buffalo" variety, which grows like stout switches. The young willow that grows out of the roots of old trees destroyed by a prairie fire is a different proposition. The young engineer has naturally been so busy working for others,—not only ploughing and threshing, but building well-cribs,—that he has not done very much farming on his own account. Still, he has added a "purchased homestead" (at 12s. 6d. an acre) to his quarter section, and of his 320 acres he has got 75 under crop.

**Sod Shack and Frame House.** Now I hark back to the four others. Their sod shack was fairly comfortable; the turf walls kept out the heat in summer and the cold in winter; but there was only one room, and when you deduct the area covered by one single and two double beds, there is not much left of a total space measuring 16 by 20 feet. These young men therefore, proceeded to build what might be called a mansion, right in the middle of the section, so that each brother had a quarter of the house on his own land. No such house had been seen in the district. It measured 42 by 28 feet; and, as the owners discovered when the "freeze-up" came, it was an "awful job" to keep it warm with a couple of "box" stoves, though one of the brothers always got up in the middle of the night to pile on fresh logs. These stoves burned a whole sleigh-load of logs in five days.

**The Bachelors' Winter in the Wilds.** We sometimes think of the Canadian farmer as having nothing to do in winter; and certainly he has a great deal more leisure than in summer; but think of the amount of wood-cutting and hauling required not only to keep those stoves going all winter but to lay in a stock of fuel for cooking in the next open season. Besides, there were the beasts to be fed from the haystack and all the odd "chores" of the house.

Taking it in turns to cook and wash up, the four brothers were not over-worked; but they had quite enough occupation to preserve them from any danger of boredom, and quite enough open-air exercise to keep them physically fit. They had plenty of books to read when the day's work was done. One of them had a fiddle, and the firm jointly possessed a gramophone, which may be a dreadful affliction under certain circumstances, but a glorious acquisition on a pioneer Western farm. With such an orchestra, and such floor space, you may imagine the popularity of the New Year's dance to which these bachelor hosts invited the neighbourhood.

## CHAPTER V

### BUYING AND SELLING LAND.

**Well-founded Optimism.** "We have got a good thing and we know it." That is what the Westerner says about his land; and it is true. There are exceptions, but, taking the country by and large, it is overwhelmingly true. In some countries, it takes a blind man to be an optimist. In Western Canada the men who know most and see farthest are the most optimistic.

You may find a man here and there who has failed. In practically every such case the reason is found in the man himself. Lack of intelligence or perseverance, or some other defect of character, is sometimes the cause. Sometimes a man takes land without sufficient inquiry, and finds it poor, or unfitted for the particular use he puts it to. More often, the farmer has simply "bitten off more than he can chew." He may have taken a homestead with little or no capital to work it with. A good crop, he knows, will set him on his feet, but if the first crop is poor, he has nothing to fall back on.

Do not imagine, however, when you find a man short of cash that he is insolvent, or even poor. It is the commonest habit in the

West for a man who owns land to buy more. He may not want to use it, or he may take it simply for re-sale at a profit. In either case, he shows his faith, based on experience, in its value. But the money he gets for his crop has to go in payment of the instalments and interest on the land he has bought. He may have bought altogether too much, so that he feels straightened for years even if he has a succession of fine crops. The wise man does not necessarily refrain from buying more land, but he knows where to draw the line. If he acts with judgment and sober self-restraint, he is no more to be condemned than a manufacturer who, fore-seeing that the price of his raw material is morally certain to rise, lays in a large stock while it is cheap, though he has to borrow money to pay for it.

The fear of a "slump," expressed by timid outsiders, arises from ignorance of Western conditions. I should not be at all surprised to see a slump in "sub-divisions",—that is, in land on the outskirts of towns, which speculators have bought up in the hope that one day soon the fields will be covered with suburban residences. The price of such land represents merely a problematical future. A "sub-division" may become a fashionable suburb; but it may not. It may stagnate, or



Showing How Some Western Farmers Prepare the Soil for Seeding.

even relapse into prairie, while the town expands in other directions.

The price of farm lands, on the other hand, represents a real present value, to be tested by what the land is actually producing or can be easily made to produce. Judged by that test, land prices practically all over the Prairie Provinces are far below their value. In the newer districts, land of very fair quality can still be had at £2 or £2 5s. an acre, and choice sections at £4; while in districts thickly settled from £6 to £12 may be asked. These prices are extremely low compared to the money obtainable for similar or poorer land in the North-west States of the neighbouring republic, and there is no discoverable reason to prevent the land on one side of the frontier from rising to and beyond the level that now prevails on the other. Meanwhile, Americans are flocking in to seize the opportunity of buying first-rate new land at a quarter the price they sell their old farms for; and this influx, with the simultaneous pouring in of hundreds and thou-

sands of Old Country folk and Eastern Canadians, is of course, sending prices up.

Western land is obtained in various ways. The Government still offers 160 acres of Crown Land free to any male 18 years of age or over who will live on his homestead six months in a year for three years in a habitable house, ploughing 10 acres in each year and having 20 acres under crop in the third. The new-comer who wants to get good land in this way should be a sturdy and resolute man, prepared to work hard, to live plainly,—unless he has more money than most homesteaders have to start with,—and to haul his crops probably 10 or 15 miles to a station, unless he happens to hear of a nearer homestead on which an earlier homesteader has failed to comply with the conditions of ultimate ownership.

A homesteader in certain districts can get an additional 160 acres by purchase, at 12s. 6d. an acre.

A certain proportion of the crown land in every township has been set aside as an endowment for public education. From time to time, as money is required for such a purpose, the Government puts up some of this land to auction, but it generally fetches the full market price of other land in the neighbourhood.

The Canadian Pacific Railway, the Hudson's Bay Company, and in Saskatchewan, the Canadian Northern Railway, own large areas scattered over the prairie and park lands, which they sell on the instalment plan. Various land companies also have considerable areas for sale, and a multitude of private owners hold land which may be had from them on the spot or from real estate agents in the towns and villages. The average price of railway and Hudson's Bay land is about £3 an acre. The Southern Alberta Land Company has sold land at £8 an acre, but that is for land about to come under irrigation.

The Canadian Pacific gives the buyer 20 years to pay in, with interest at 6 per cent.; the Hudson's Bay Company, 7 years, with 7 per cent. interest; the Canadian Northern, 6 years, at 6 per cent. The small owner commonly asks a third or fourth of the price in cash, and gives from 4 to 6 years for payment of the remainder, charging from 5 to 8 per cent. interest. The loan companies which advance money—about half the total value—on land require 8 per cent.

So much for the wild land, the raw, unbroken prairie "as it was in the beginning."

Farmers are generally to be found, however, who will sell the land they are farming, with house, well, barn, fences, and all complete. One man may have been farming for many years, and thinks it is time to retire and live at his ease,—which he can very well do, if he has been a good farmer,—on his savings and the price of his holding. Another man, of the very different class mentioned earlier in this chapter, wants to sell because he has got into a fix. He needs the cash in a hurry; he cannot "sit tight" waiting for a customer who will pay the full price; and so a buyer who offers two-thirds of the value may get the place at a bargain. Naturally, in such a case the chances are that the land is not in a very high state of cultivation, though the soil may be very good indeed.

Even the really high-class farm, in a thoroughly good state of cultivation, may sometimes be had for much less than a man would have to spend in buying wild land of the same quality and turning

it into a similar farm himself. For example, I know of High-class a half-section (320 acres), 240 acres being under cultivation, to be had for \$35 (say £7 5s.) an acre, with a good Properties Cheap. eight-roomed house, excellent stable, granary, ice-house and other improvements, thrown in. Another half-section, with more modest but serviceable buildings, and 112 acres cultivated, is priced at \$28, or £5 16s. an acre. A third farm of the same size, with about the same proportion under cultivation, could be had at \$26, or £5 4s. an acre. In the same neighbourhood I know of a particularly attractive section (640 acres), two-thirds of it under cultivation, with an excellent dwelling, a second house, all the necessary farm-buildings, wind-mill pumps, and a brook running through the property—a most valuable asset where cattle are kept—for \$40 (£8 6s.) an acre. All these farms are within 20 miles of one of the largest cities, and have railway stations within a few miles of them. Now the wild land in that neighbourhood, with a good deal of scrub and timber to be cleared off it, sells at about £5 4s. an acre. At first Why the sight, the difference between that figure and the price of Difference the cultivated farms just quoted is curiously small. The Is Small. fact seems to be that the owner of such a farm as a rule brought it up to its present state largely by his own labour; his books show no heavy total expenditure on "improvements"



Milking Time on a Homestead in Central Manitoba.

which he would feel bound to get back when selling. Besides, he probably bought the place originally for a trifle, and if he gets £5 or £7 an acre for land that cost him £1 or £2 he feels that he is making an enormous profit—in addition to all he has made out of the land year by year,—and he is naturally well content.

The buyer of a high-class farm like that ought to be a high-class farmer with a fair amount of capital. For the man of experience with less money to spare, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company has established a system of ready-made farms. The peculiarity of that system is that the buyer not only finds almost everything ready for him on his arrival but is instructed and watched over and helped in various ways till he is quite independent. The Duke of Sutherland and other private owners on a smaller scale are following the Company's example.

## CHAPTER VI

### TOWN LIFE IN THE WEST.

"God made the country, man made the town"; and I do not envy the colossal conceit that thinks man's creation best. The idea is widespread, though not quite so bluntly expressed; and its origin is easily explained. Man is a social animal, and so long as he is deprived of social advantages by living in the country he will be attracted, and often irresistibly attracted, by the town. I have already shown how country life in the west is acquiring the social advantages it once so sorely lacked. Many steps have yet to be taken along that road, and not only in the new Canada but even in the Old Mother-land;

**Country Versus Town** but a time is coming when the country dweller will enjoy so large a proportion of the city's benefits, in addition to the rural benefits of pure air and elbow room and all the sights and sounds and silences of Nature, that towns will no longer exercise their present undue and often unhealthy fascination. Let us hope, also that the towns will redouble their present efforts, still much too feeble and limited, to thin out their crowded central parts and to make sure that all the new suburbs springing up around them are laid out with plenty of street and garden space as well as public parks.

Meanwhile, with all our sense of the danger of crowded population, we can well understand and even share the western townsman's pride in the rapid growth and many-sided progress of his busy community. Next to the exhilaration of reclaiming for the use of man the wild and boundless prairie which has lain fallow ever since the creation, we may put the exhilaration of raising the walls of the first human habitation, encircling the railway station with a little village of houses and stores, building the village up into a town, and enlarging the town into a city; watching the single street throw out branches and the branch throw out twigs, till the plain is a network of lines of life; witnessing and taking part in the foundation and rise of schools and churches, clubs and hotels, financial and municipal institutions, commercial and social organizations, and all the other outgrowths and aids of civilization in which a vigorous community takes pride.

Men still living in Winnipeg remember it very well as a little village, the population being chiefly Hudson's Bay Company men engaged in trading with the Indian fur-hunters. Most of the present inhabitants only know the Hudson's Bay Company as the owner of a big shop or "department store" on Main Street. The ladies of Winnipeg would be very much surprised, when buying fashionable clothes or any other luxury of white civilization, if a blanketed Indian were to march in with an armful of beaver-skins. Winnipeg, we are sometimes told, is going to be a second Chicago.

I hope not. One Chicago is enough—and to spare,—remembering all the characteristics of the place. But certainly Winnipeg is to Western Canada what Chicago is to the western States; and, almost as certainly, she will hold her pre-eminence against all rivals. All three of the great trans-continental railways from the East have found it necessary to come together at Winnipeg, the gateway of the West, though they soon diverge again and cross the prairie by different routes on their way to the Pacific ocean.

In 1870 you could only count 215 people living at Winnipeg. In 1912, including suburbs, the population was estimated at 200,000. The



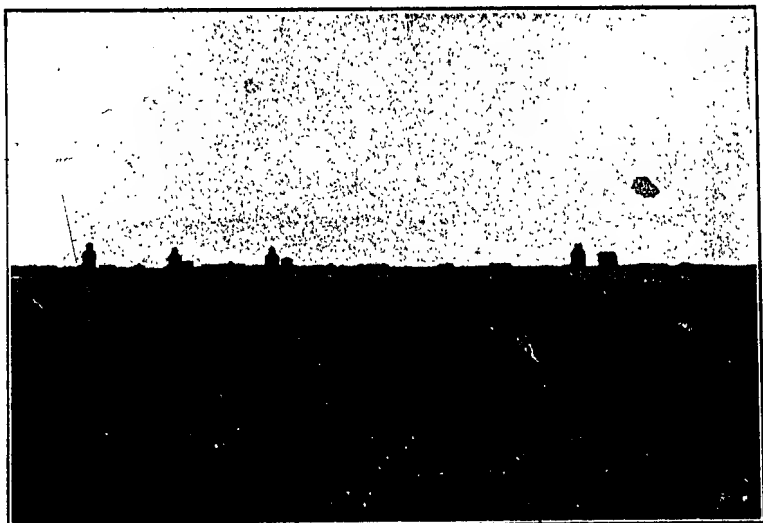
electric tramways carried 31,000,000 passengers in 1910.

**Wholesale Trade.** But I do not wish to be too statistical. The quantity of grain and cattle sold in Winnipeg or sent through it to the east from all the prairie provinces is prodigious. The place is also a great wholesale centre for the distribution of eastern manufactures and other goods all over the West; more than 1,600 commercial travellers have their headquarters there.

But how do the people live? That is the most important question, after all. Do they enjoy their life, or is it a mere struggle for existence?

**How the People Live.** Those who think work a curse, and cherish a constant grudge against the world for not dropping its plums straight into their mouths, must be pretty miserable in Winnipeg,—or, indeed, anywhere in Canada. But the Westerners as a rule enjoy work, it seems to me, more than the folk at home.

The climate has something to do with this. The heat of a mid-summer day is often trying, but it is generally followed by a cool restoring night; "muggy" weather is practically unknown; and the climate as a whole makes for energy. Another great reason for the zest which people find in their work is that it leads to something. In



A Wheat Field Near One of the Towns. Note the Grain Elevators in the Background.

the Old Country, millions are toiling on with nothing to look forward to but toil, toil, toil growing harder and worse paid as they grow old, and only ending in the grave. I do not suppose that energetic westerners work with the object of escaping from work; "to do nothing" is hardly their ideal of bliss; but they always have before them the hope, and indeed the practical certainty, that by diligence and enterprise they will steadily increase their belongings and raise their position, so that when their energies begin to flag they will not become paupers or pensioners, but can afford to relax their efforts and live in comfort and independence to the end.

"That means," you will say, "that they can save money, and a good deal of it. But is not living very expensive out there?"

It is,—and it is not.

**Adding to Income.** It is harder for a man on a moderate salary to "keep up appearances" in Winnipeg than in London, and even though his salary is actually larger the additional income may only equal his additional expenditure. Even in that class, however, a man with eyes wide open often discovers

many opportunities of increasing his revenue by extra work, which he does not see in England. This practice of "making money on the side" as it is called, involves enterprise, energy, and some sacrifice of leisure time; but it need not involve any sacrifice of self-respect, which is the great thing.

While he can make more, he can spend less on appearance without suffering in the esteem of his neighbours, most of whom are more bent on "getting on" to a future of wealth than "cutting a dash" in the present. The "frills" of life are undoubtedly dear; but they are not absolutely indispensable. The finer sorts of clothing are costly; but second-best is generally good enough.

Some of the necessaries are dear, too; but others are quite cheap. Adding all the items of expenditure together, the total cost of living in a western city is higher than it is in an English town; but whether it is much or little higher "depends on the liver." Until a housewife learns how to shop to the best advantage, and unless she accommodates her requirements to local conditions, she is likely to find the excess very considerable.

But she can do both those things. The other day I visited an Old Country family settled in Winnipeg, probably the dearest of Western cities to live in. They had been accustomed to a very fair degree of comfort and refinement; yet, without any sense of deprivation, they found it possible to keep house in Winnipeg on very little more than in the small town they had come from.

I found them in a good house on a pleasant street nearly in the heart of the city, each dwelling in its own garden, among shade trees which made the street a beautiful avenue. "We pay a high rent," the lady said, "because we did not care to live in a little cottage on the outskirts. We wanted a nice house, and we knew we should have no trouble in paying the rent, though that is equal to the whole of my husband's salary. We just put a small advertisement of a few lines in the paper one day, and immediately we got all the young men we wanted to take all the rooms we could spare. That pays the whole of our rent." It is a twelve-roomed house, including three living rooms and six bedrooms. The landlord pays the rates, all except the water, which costs about 4s. a month. Electric light comes to about 8s. or 10s. a month in summer. The husband had got a berth, to begin with, at £13 a month; the son, just out of school, was getting £6 a month, and the daughter another £6, with the promise of a rise to £10 in the near future.

"As for living expenses," the lady said, "they are not nearly so much higher, as we had been led to expect. The most serious item is coal, £2 a ton, against 26s. at home. Early vegetables were dear, but now we get most garden stuff at very reasonable prices. Eggs are 1s. a dozen; we paid 1s. 2d. at home. Butter is cheaper, too, 1s. 1d. to 1s. 2½d. Bread is just about the same as at home. Meat is much cheaper. Steak that we paid 1s. or 1s. 1d. for is 7½d. here, and we get lovely veal cutlets for the same price. For the cheaper cuts of mutton, which used to cost us 7d., we only pay 2½d. a pound here. Milk is a fraction over 4d. a quart; that is, 12 quarts for 4s. 2d.; and one month we got 14 quarts for that price. Some things are dear or cheap according to the way you buy them. Vinegar, for instance, is dear if you buy it by the bottle, but not if you buy it by measure. And starch,—I bought a shilling packet, and it was only enough for one starching. Now I get it by the pound, and a shilling's worth lasts me a month."

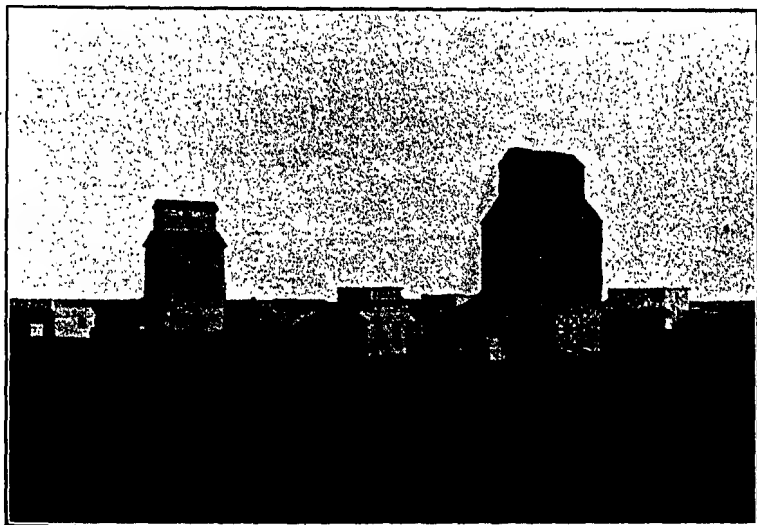
At a little town in Alberta, by the way, the market prices in the middle of March were:—potatoes, 2s. a bushel; butter, 1s. to 1s. 6d. a lb.; eggs, 10d. to 1s. a dozen; chickens, dressed, 7½d. a lb.; beef, 4½d.;

mutton, 6½d.; pork, 5d.; veal, 4½d.

One of the young men in that Winnipeg house was a pattern-maker in an iron and bridge company's works, getting 1s. 5½d. an hour for a ten-hour day. Another was a house-painter, getting 1s.

10½d. an hour for a nine-hour day. From that he was **Wages.** sending over to his wife as much as his whole wage had amounted to in the Old Country, and still he was able to save money. A labourer in Winnipeg will earn nearly £3 a week for the season, or a total of £90 for the year if he does nothing for five months,—which is not necessary. If he is married, he can either take a £60 house and let a room or two, or pay about £24 a year for two unfurnished rooms and use the kitchen stove; or, if he is resolved on achieving independence, he can put up and gradually enlarge a little shack in the suburb where land is cheap and can be paid for in instalments.

"It rather upsets some of our notions," a clerk on £13 a month said to me, "to live in the same house with a plasterer or bricklayer and realize that they earn double what I do. There is a long slack season in the building trade to be provided against; but some of ourselves run more or less risk of being thrown out too. And as for moral or even social superiority, there's nothing in it. They're as



A New Town in Saskatchewan—the Growth of One Year.

good men as I am any day, and they know it, even if they haven't had as much education. Presently some of them will be making fortunes and rolling along in their motor cars, while I'm running to catch a tram."

The Country Club on the outskirts of Winnipeg would seem to indicate a community of millionaires. Its new building has cost about £20,000. The Assiniboine River Club. meanders along one side of the beautifully wooded estate, and the golf course winds about among poplar groves. The common clubless citizens also have their parks in plenty; and on the shore of Lake Winnipeg, nearer than Brighton is to London, they have a regular seaside resort.

I am inclined to dwell on the parks of western cities, because they most significantly illustrate the high degree of civilization which the West has now attained. In town as well as country the people

are not so engrossed in toil and care for their natural needs  
**Parks.** that they can spare neither time nor money for the beautifying of their surroundings. As for the money, the rapid increase in the value of land makes it possible to pay for town improvements and embellishments by a very moderate tax.

**West of Winnipeg** 133 miles lies the city of **Brandon.** It is a little city of about 18,000 inhabitants, but it has a surprisingly large number of really beautiful houses, set in lawns which slope down to sidewalks of cement. I strolled one day into a park well laid out and as well kept as the most fastidious gardener could wish. There the townsfolk sit at leisure under varied trees on neatly trimmed lawns among tasteful flower-beds and rockeries. On the northern border of the town is a charming picnic ground amid shady groves on the bank of a serpentine lake. On the far side of the Assiniboine, a favourite drive winds through the Federal Government's experimental farm, where the superintendent's handsome gabled house rises in a "new forest" of trees as varied as any noble connoisseur in forestry could desire for his English park. For the utilitarian fields, as I have already shown, represent only one side—the most important still, of course—of the experimental work. The Government encourages and helps the farmer not only to raise the quantity and quality of his money-making crops, but to increase his pleasure and contentment in life,—to improve his home as well as his homestead.

There are two other "cities" in Manitoba. **Portage la Prairie,** with its population of 5,892, is the smaller of the two but in a sense the more important, as it has a really independent existence. **St. Boniface** has 7,483 inhabitants, but it is practically a suburb of Winnipeg, only a river separating them. It began as a settlement of French half-breeds; and in the churchyard of its Roman Catholic cathedral lies Louis Riel, the ill-balanced man who led the Red River Rebellion of 1870 and was finally hanged for his second offence in 1885. His granite gravestone, and the old gate of Fort Garry in the larger city across the river, are almost the only visible reminders of an era which seems now as remote as the Middle Ages.

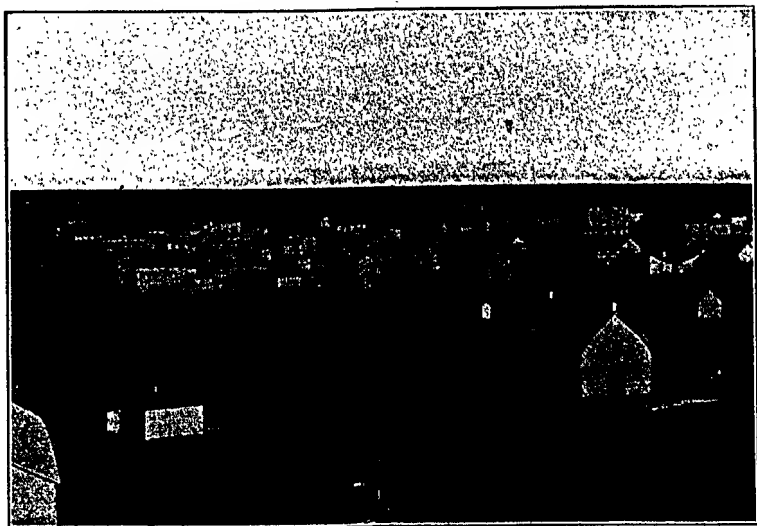
**Regina,** the Queen City of Saskatchewan, 224 miles beyond Brandon and 337 miles west of Winnipeg, is a capital which owes little to Nature but is piling up a heavy debt to Art. The Parliament Building, which houses the Provincial Legislatures and departmental officials, is a most imposing edifice; and it impresses the eye of taste by its harmonious proportions,—beauty achieved without sacrifice of dignified simplicity. It has no advantage of site; there was no hill to serve it as pedestal; yet it rises conspicuous from the level plain, which has there been laid out as a park, with a long lake winding through it for the delight of boating and swimming citizens.

In Manitoba, the capital is the centre of educational **Colleges.** as well as political life. Winnipeg is the seat of the Provincial University, and has several denominational colleges besides. In Saskatchewan, Saskatoon was chosen as the site for the Provincial University. Regina has now not only a Collegiate Institute, but a brand-new university college of its own, this having been erected by the Methodists.

The city of **Moosejaw,** I confess, surprised me the last time I visited it. It is only 40 miles beyond Regina, and had but 13,823 inhabitants as against the capital's 30,213; yet, I found it full of life and enterprise, and it had actually built an electric tram system of its own. It is an important railway junction; the Canadian Pacific's lines coming in from the great

American cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis join the main line at this point; but its life is chiefly fed by the prosperity of the farming population around,—which is the chief explanation of the growth and wealth of practically every city, town and village in the West. "It is no uncommon thing," a bank manager of Moosejaw tells me, "for a man hereabouts to have a balance sheet with a margin of £8,000 or £10,000 on the right side."

A long-haired Red Indian in a black and yellow football jersey sat at the head of the most conspicuous table in a popular restaurant, and a crowd of sun-burned white men (it is the white man who gets really red, by the way) ate with him in perfect amity. I had shared pot-luck with Indians before, and would gladly have sampled the shilling meal which attracted him, but there was not a vacant chair. Not far off I found a vacancy in a "swell" restaurant which charged 1s. 6d. The furniture and decorations were almost as tasteful as in an eighteen-penny lunch place in London; and the meal itself, served by neat waitresses, was nothing to complain of:—soup; finnan haddock; "beef saute, English style," fricassee of veal, roast beef, or cold meats and salad; boiled potatoes and turnips "in cream"; apple or rhubarb pie or custard pudding; tea, coffee or milk. For meals at a leading hotel, I noticed, £5 a month was charged, or £4 for the "no-breakfasters," who seemed fairly numerous.



A Sample of the Towns Springing Into Being All Over the Canadian West.

Here also I found a rather superior "rooming" establishment, where a furnished apartment cost from £3 15s. to £6 5s. a month; no extra charge being made when the room was taken by two persons.

Saskatoon has almost ceased to surprise, so familiar Saskatoon. has the world become with the town's phenomenal growth. I need hardly do more, therefore, than repeat that it has risen from a hamlet of 113 people in 1903 to a city of 12,004 in 1911, and that it has 1,660 children at school. It is served by all three of the great railways, and it boasts of an unusually large agricultural area tributary to its commerce.

The Riverside. That great artery of Western Canada, the Saskatchewan River, flows right through the city, and gives it an inestimable advantage in situation. Along the foot of the steep and wooded southern bank a pleasure drive is being constructed; and stretching back over the prairie from the top

of the bank are the spacious grounds of the University, more than two square miles in extent. The University has been planned on a most generous scale with a view to the future; but, very wisely, no attempt has been made to force the growth of all departments at once. To begin with, admirable buildings have been put up for the department of Agriculture, and one of these will house also the classes in Arts and Sciences until these become large enough to require buildings of their own. Eventually, degrees will be given in nine departments.

Prince Albert, 87 miles north of Saskatoon, has an equally fine position on the north branch of the Saskatchewan River, and, as a city, is more beautiful,—partly because it is smaller and less busy. Do not imagine, however, that it is a sleepy place. On the contrary, there is an air of brisk alertness about it which is peculiarly agreeable when it stops short of feverish haste. Prince Albert prides itself on its venerable age, and impresses the visitor with its beautiful youth. It began life in 1866 as a Presbyterian mission station among the Indians. In 1885, when I first saw it, it was one of the most important settlements in the West,—which means that it was a nice little village, with a few stores and a flour mill. In 1911, when I stayed in it last, it had 6,254 inhabitants. What struck me most was that the roads were better kept in Prince Albert than in any other Western town, better even than in many a town of consequence in the East.

Edmonton, further west on the same river, has lost nothing by the change from water to land transit.

For many years it was only reached by a branch line running 200 miles north from the Canadian Pacific main line at Calgary. But now! The railways are simply pouring in. In 1905 the main line of the Canadian Northern arrived, opening up direct communication with Winnipeg and the head of navigation on the Great Lakes. Since then the main line of the Grand Trunk Pacific has arrived from the same points. The Canadian Pacific has followed suit with a new main line slanting up from Winnipeg through Saskatoon. As the first two of these companies are pressing on through the Yellowhead Pass to the Pacific Ocean, the stream of commerce will soon be flowing through Edmonton by two great transcontinental railways. Besides, Edmonton is the starting point of a railway to the far north, already built as far as the Athabasca, with an intention of going on to open up the rich lands of the Peace River Valley.

Edmonton is a worthy capital of the great Province of Alberta. The new Parliament House magnificently crowns the high northern bank of the river, and on the south shore the provincial university is rising. Here, then, we find a metropolitan community,—education,

Past, commerce and government uniting to give society a tone, of culture and enterprise combined, which none of them alone can create. Edmonton has a history, and is proud of its romantic past—when the Hudson's Bay men used to come up the river and meet those who had ascended the Columbia from the Pacific coast and crossed the mountains by the same pass now chosen by the railway builders,—when the Cree and Blackfoot Indians, deadly foes of one another, encamped in peace together before the Company's fort to barter furs for English wares. But Edmonton is prouder still of its present state, proudest of all to think of the future greatness within its grasp.

One after another, these Western cities are adopting the "single tax" system. That is to say, the municipal expenditure is defrayed by a rate assessed on the value of land, regardless of the use or non-use to which the land is put. Under the old system, if there were two adjoining lots of

equal value, one being vacant and the other covered with a house or shop, the latter would be taxed much more heavily than the former. Under the new system, both the lots pay exactly the same. This encourages building, and discourages the speculator who is merely holding his land "for a rise" and letting it lie idle till he can get his price. In Edmonton the tax amounts to 1.4 per cent. of the value. Thus, a piece of land valued at £1,000 pays a yearly tax of £14. If a street enjoys a special privilege in the shape of a paved roadway, it pays for it by a "local improvement" tax in addition to the ordinary city rate.

The western community has another way of compelling the absentee or speculative land-owner to take his part in paying for the benefits of city life. That is, by doing municipally various things that would otherwise be left to a charitable society or commercial company. Edmonton for example, has its Municipal city hospital, supported by the rates. The city also Enterprise. owns its electric tramways, its waterworks, its electric light system, and its telephones—which are connected with the general telephone system of the Provincial Government. The tramway, though only three years old, is already earning a profit. It is largely used for pleasure as well as for ordinary travel; and the ride out to the Exhibition Grounds, winding along the edge of the deep and



The Sod Shack Provides Crude but Comfortable Temporary Quarters for Settlers. beautifully wooded Saskatchewan valley, is one of the finest imaginable. The cost of waterworks and drainage, as the houses are scattered over a large area, is considerable. The electric light, however, pays handsomely, though its cost to the consumer has been cut down by half since the city took it over from a company. The telephones, by the way, are of the automatic sort. No exchange operator is needed. You do not have to ask for the number you want; you simply press, one after another, the figures forming the number, and you are connected automatically.

The largest city in the three Prairie Provinces, after Calgary. Winnipeg, is Calgary. Edmonton considers itself bound to win that position. Meanwhile, Calgary has got a long start and is making big strides. The city population is estimated at 63,000, and there is a "Hundred Thousand Club," which confidently hopes to bring the number up to that point within three or four years. I understand that 50 doctors, 25 dentists, 30 chemists, 9 veterinary

surgeons, 55 lawyers, 25 civil and electrical engineers, 17 architects and 9 surveyors live and practice in Calgary. There are also about 200 licensed real estate agents, and 600 commercial travellers.

It was the Canadian Pacific Railway that called this city into existence, 30 years ago, and it is still a point of great importance on the C. P. R. system. Here is the head office of the new

**The Railways Again.** "Natural Resources Department," which deals with the company's enormous land holdings. At this point the line running north from Macleod, near the United States frontier, to Edmonton, crosses and connects with the main line from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern, moreover, are running lines down to Calgary from the north-east, just as the Canadian Pacific has run a line up to Edmonton from the south-east.

**Hotels.** It is a very busy place,—you see and feel that at once, as soon as you set foot in it, and fuller knowledge only confirms your impression. The Canadian Pacific has put up a magnificent £400,000 hotel, to rival the same company's Royal Alexandra Hotel at Winnipeg; and none too soon, for the passengers arriving at Calgary have far outgrown the accommodation for them.

Business, however, is not everything, even there. I remember being impressed 20 years ago by the well-watered lawns and flower beds surrounding neat houses in what was then the little town of Calgary. The taste already showing "in spots" at that distant date has developed and spread in all directions since. The city has four parks, where bands play on summer evenings. The peaks of the Rockies are always on view on the western horizon, while only 82 miles away is an ideal holiday resort in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, the famous Banff National Park of 5,732 square miles, maintained by the Federal Government. There are about 50 athletic clubs in the city, with 1,500 members, which seems an astonishingly large proportion of the 63,000 inhabitants. Equally surprising is Calgary's recent erection of "the two largest theatres in Canada." She already had a small regular theatre, several variety houses, and I don't know how many cinematograph theatres. Is there any English town of double the size where public amusement could be organized on anything like such a scale?

**Prices of Working Clothes.** Clothes for country wear are by no means expensive. I have seen cloth suits priced as low as \$6.50 (27s.). There is not much wear in them; but by sensibly wearing blue overalls, which cost only 6s., the life of a suit can be indefinitely prolonged, and "any old thing will do" underneath. In a cheap store at Edmonton the other day I noticed a stout dark red working shirt, with buff collar, priced at 3s. 9d.; socks, from 5d. upwards, a heavy make costing 1s.; boots, from 12s., and a rough pair at 8s.; soft felt hats, 5s. to 8s.; heavy winter underclothes, 4s. 6d.; overshoes, with felt tops and rubber soles, 6s. to 9s.; driving gauntlets, 2s. 9d. to 5s.; sheepskin jacket with the wool inside, warm enough for the coldest weather, 27s., or 50s. with corduroy outside; sweaters, 10s. and 16s.

"Whatever else the West may claim to be," people sometimes say, "it is not a manufacturing country."

**The Rise of Manufacturing.** We discover, however, as soon as we put this sweeping statement to the test, that here also an astonishing change has come to pass. A few years ago the statement was true, but, in its sweeping form, it is true no longer. The high price of labour, and, in large parts of the prairie region, the lack of coal and water-power, put the West at a disadvantage, and certain industries are handicapped also by the distance which raw materials have to be

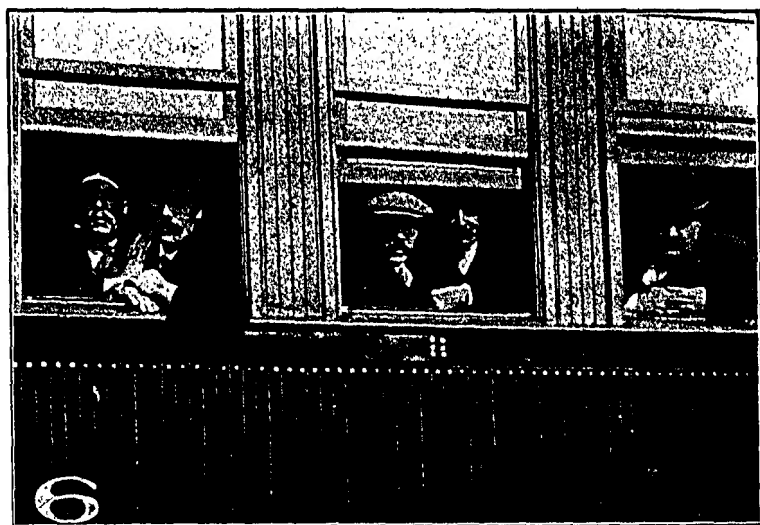


brought by rail. But a large part of the West is plentifully endowed with motive power; labour-saving machinery does much to counteract the effect of high wages; and the raw materials of many industries lie ready to the manufacturer's hand.

Winnipeg alone has about 250 factories, and some are of considerable importance. The list of products includes structural steel and iron, bricks, cement, and other building materials; waggon, carriages and harness; fencing; soap and oil; cigars; jewellery; clothing; bedding; cured meats and cereal foods.

Electric power is developed on the Winnipeg River, 77 miles away, and brought to the city by cable. Prince Albert also has considerable water-power available, within about 25 miles. In Southern Alberta there is a vast supply of natural gas, which also provides extremely cheap power to Medicine Hat, Calgary, Lethbridge, and the other towns of that region.

It is the coal of Alberta, however, that gives the Province as a whole its greatest advantage, from the manufacturer's point of view, besides furnishing cheap fuel to farmer and townsman alike. A large



"The Campbells are Coming." Scotch Immigrants Entrained for the West.

part of the Province rests on a bed of coal, which lies so close to the surface that you can see it protruding from the river banks and in many places you cut through it when you dig a well. Out on the plains, north and south, in the Edmonton and Lethbridge districts, for example, the coal is a lignite, of varying quality. But even a poor lignite is useful as house fuel; and the better sort repays transport over long distances. At Tofield, found this lignite being quarried in broad daylight, about 12 feet of earth having been cleared away, revealing a seam 7 feet thick. The coal was being sold at 10s. a ton, and much of it was going to Edmonton, 40 miles away, for use in the municipal power house. Up in the Crow's Nest Pass, among the mountains of South-western Alberta, on the British Columbia boundary, large quantities of bituminous coal are being mined, and at Bankhead there is an important deposit of anthracite.

The overflowing energy of the Western folk shows itself not only in keen competition among individuals, but in equally keen co-operation for the promotion of their common interests. Public spirit, the spirit of local patriotism, has banded the people together not only in

organizations covering whole provinces and the three provinces together, especially for agricultural advancement and protection, but in separate bodies for the strengthening and exaltation of the various urban centres. Every city and town, and almost every village above the smallest, has its Board of Trade, akin to the Chamber of Commerce of an English town, but more energetic and versatile.

In a word, it is a great country and a good one, this Western Canada, and when every allowance is made for such undesirables as succeed in slipping through the immigration laws, the Western Canadians as a community are worthy of the land they live in.

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### CANADIAN GOVERNMENT EMIGRATION AGENTS.

Intending emigrants would do well, before deciding upon the particular locality to which to go, to consult one of the Canadian Government Emigrant Agents in the United Kingdom, who will without charge, gladly give, either personally or by letter, full and reliable details regarding any point upon which the intending emigrant desires information. Other pamphlets about Canada will be supplied upon application to any of the agents mentioned below:

#### England.

Mr. J. Obed Smith, Asst. Sup't, of Emigration, 11-12 Charing Cross,  
London, S.W.

Birmingham,	Thomas Hammond,	139 Corporation Street,
Exeter,	John Cardale,	81 Queen Street.
Liverpool,	A. F. Jury,	48 Lord Street.
York,	L. Burnett,	16 Parliament Street.
Peterborough,	F. O. Chapman,	Long Causeway.
Carlisle,	E. McLeod,	54 Castle Street.

#### Scotland.

Aberdeen,	G. G. Archibald,	116 Union Street.
Glasgow,	J. K. Millar,	107 Hope Street.

#### Ireland.

Belfast,	John Webster,	17-19 Victoria Street.
Dublin,	Ed. O'Kelly,	44 Dawson Street.

#### Wales.

Usk, Monmouthshire,	S. W. Pugh,	Adrian Court.
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### IMPORTANT.

Farmers, Farm Labourers, and Female Domestic Servants are the only people whom the Canadian Immigration Department advises to come to Canada.

All others should get definite assurance of employment in Canada before leaving home, and have money enough to support them for a time in case of disappointment.

The proper time to reach Canada is between the beginning of April and the end of September.

